

RESURRECTION ROCK

By William MacGaughey and
Edwin Walmer

THE BLIND MAN'S EYES
THE INDIAN DRUM



"What is it?" she cried to him, suddenly shaken.
FRONTISPIECE. See page 51.

RESURRECTION ROCK

BY
EDWIN BALMER

WITH FRONTISPIECE BY
ANTON OTTO FISCHER

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1

RESURRECTION ROCK

CHAPTER I

THE REGION OF THE ROCK

ABOUT the clear, deep waters of Lake Superior, and bounding the northern sands of Michigan, lies a realm of forest and of heights, rugged, wild, alluring,—rich in copper and iron as are few other regions of the world. Kingdoms, which won wide influence, have owned far meaner materials of power; empire has warred with empire for stakes half as great. Were this domain of the old world, and so situated that nation might match demand with nation for it, innumerable times it must have made armies march: men by the thousand would have lain down their lives for these northern peninsulas.

In fact, France and her Indian allies long ago garrisoned forest stockades in war with England over this territory; but the blockhouses protected only Jesuit missions and fur-trading posts. England defended the region — with few men but bitterly — against the colonists: yet after Pitt surrendered it, half a century was to pass before men began to take the timber for the cargoes of the lakes: and it was the generation of the sons of these lumbermen who sank the copper pits and began to scale away the mighty mountains of red iron which ladened deep the ships for Chicago. Detroit. Toledo. Erie and Buffalo, whence cars freighted the

metal to the furnaces of the Monongahela. By that time, there was no question what nation was to own this land; the strength of the United States guaranteed it against foreign aggression and confined the struggle for possession to personal and individual combat of man against man — by right, by strength, by wit, by trick or by violence, open and secret — for the winning of power and wealth.

Of those who won, some departed for distant localities; others remained near-by and became "big" men of Duluth, Marquette, Minneapolis, Detroit and Chicago where they built their huge mansions and gave luxury to their children, while companies, whose shares sold daily upon the Boston and New York Stock exchanges, deepened and extended their mines, and while the Michigan hillsides, stripped to dead stumps of hemlock and pine, slowly reclothed with fluttering forests of second growth,— maple, beech, ironwood, glistening white birch and cedar.

Under the boughs — light-green and bluish-black, many-tinted — Indians crept to the woodlands. Chippewas and Ottawas raised rude shacks or roofed over and rechinked old walls abandoned by the lumberjacks. Deer and fox, mink, porcupine, beaver and skunk increased; the Indians hunted and trapped somewhat as they used to do before the pine forest vanished; they fished in stream and lake; they kept clear little garden patches and planted corn and beans and potatoes. The railroads through the forest remained; but they served chiefly the Sault or bore goods to St. Ignace for trans-shipment across the Straits. Other settlements on the shores at the point of the northern peninsula lapsed to fishing villages where ancient bells of Jesuit chapels tolled tolerantly, dreamily, and where

French and words of the Chippewa tongue were to be heard. In the growing forests, the old mill towns bleached and cracked under the summer sun, rotted in the melting snows,—deserted, gray and ghostlike. But here and there, where something had happened—for good or for evil—which a man might never forget, the ghosts drew back the living.

At least, men thus explained the return of Lucas Cullen to St. Florentin—Lucas, the younger of the two Cullen brothers with whose names everything “successful” in that section was once associated. More than a generation ago they had gutted St. Florentin township; so when they went, almost every one else went with them. No one thought that Lucas would return; but in 1896 suddenly he appeared and, upon the site of the cabin where he and his wife lived when they founded St. Florentin and bossed the men building the first sawmill, he caused a new, enormous dwelling to be erected.

Lucas, who then was speaking of himself as “of Chicago,” called this a summer cottage; and he made it famous immediately by bringing there for the summer the French nobleman, the Marquis de Chenal, “a friend of my daughter Cecilia.” The Marquis so well liked Cecilia and liked the place—not to mention, as did many of the enviously minded, Lucas Cullen’s millions—that he remained at St. Florentin all summer.

He married Cecilia that winter and took her—together with a million or so of Michigan forest money—to his château in Touraine; and neither of them ever returned to the peninsula. But Lucas and his wife and their younger daughter and their two sons came the next year; then Deborah married a westerner and moved to Wyoming. “Junior” Lucas and his brother

RESURRECTION ROCK

John also married; and their wives preferred the more fashionable resorts of the east for the next summers. So, at the turn of the century, old Lucas and his wife, with their servants, were coming alone to the enormous frame house on the edge of the ruined old mill town above the shores of Lake Huron.

Then, when Lucas' wealth and power and position seemed absolutely safe, the madness for assailing successful men broke out; Lucas, more willful and obstinate with his advancing years, received his share of the assaults; and he met them so characteristically that politicians forgot others in their hue and cry to run him "out." When, the next year, Lucas gave over his affairs to his sons and retired to St. Florentin, the politicians boasted that they had won; and Lucas, crafty and practical as always, let them say it, as that seemed to satisfy them and keep them from scrutinizing what his sons were doing.

The real reason for Lucas' retreat from Chicago — as the family and a few others knew — was his break with his brother John. They had always quarreled; but now they ceased to speak, and the same streets could not hold both. So Lucas fitted up his cottage for an around-the-year home and, when he emerged and was interviewed by the press, he expounded upon the completeness of his content in surroundings such as those in which his own hands had toiled. He was still strong and huge and hearty to roam the woods on snowshoes and with a gun under his arm. So his motives were comprehensible enough to his white and bronze-skinned neighbors of the new forest.

The purpose of the builder of the other great house near St. Florentin was far more puzzling. In the first place, the site was not upon the peninsula but upon a

tiny island in Lake Huron, half a mile from shore, a rocky, precipitous islet locally known as Resurrection Rock. The name, a couple of centuries ago, was French — *Isle de la Resurrection* — a designation won by some event long forgotten. No one had lived there within recent generations except an Indian fisherman who had found Resurrection Rock too lonely and had departed. When Mackinac and Bois Blanc and other islands near the Straits came into demand as sites for summer homes, no one took enough interest in Resurrection Rock to inquire who might own it. But in 1905, some one bought the isle. The name of the purchaser, Marcellus Clarke of Chicago, meant nothing; and he never appeared. In his stead came a small, alert, observant man of thirty, by name Halford, who built himself a cabin upon the rock and abode there for several months, fishing a bit, gardening a little, but most of the time waiting, doing nothing. He welcomed any one who came to the island; he dined white man and red man; he encouraged conversation and confidences on the part of his callers; but he, himself, confided nothing.

Obviously he was there under orders; for regularly, at two-week intervals, he received at Quesnel, on the railroad, a letter from Marcellus Clarke, Chicago; regularly he dispatched an answer. After three months another young man — taller, a bit slower in action but quite as alert and keen-eyed — relieved him, likewise generous and keeping open cabin upon the island, welcoming acquaintance, silent as to his own business. Then he disappeared and was not relieved, and the island was deserted until the next summer when Halford returned for half a year alone. When he again departed, the cabin stood empty and the island abandoned until, in the summer of 1912, barges appeared and an-

chored in the smooth water between Resurrection Rock and the shore; masons, carpenters, plasterers and artisans of a dozen trades — all from Chicago — lived upon the barges or camped on the island while they erected a large, handsome house, chimneyed, wide of roof, graceful and pleasing.

When furniture and china, rugs, hangings and draperies came — some new, some old — the neighborhood was certain that the purpose of the long watch upon the island was at last to be disclosed; but when the last draper followed the last carpenter away, no master of the mansion appeared. Instead, the newly completed house was closed; doors locked and barred, windows soundly shuttered. A white farmer, who lived a mile or so away upon the opposite mainland, was entrusted with the keys and was paid to inspect the premises periodically. He reported that the house was merely such a house as the rich city people had at Mackinac and Harbour Point, finished and furnished for occupancy; Marcellus Clarke of Chicago, who paid the taxes, paid him; that was all he knew. Yes; it was an ordinary enough house.

But, after a few inspections alone, he always took some one with him. Speculation and wonder in the neighborhood soon took weird and fantastic forms; the mansion had not been built for the living but for the dead; the windows, as seen from the shore in the moonlight, seemed to show lights of their own. Poor, pious people ceased to approach.

At first, old Lucas Cullen laughed at the stories; but as time went on, they began to affect him. He offered himself, once, as escort for the farmer who had the keys; and after going through the empty house, Lucas journeyed to Chicago where he visited and peremptorily

challenged Marcellus Clarke. But the interview only returned Lucas to St. Florentin without new information and more disturbed and uneasy than before. The house on the island fastened itself definitely upon Lucas Cullen as an ill omen. For months he would avoid mentioning it, avoid gazing toward it, avoid even the shores opposite; then he would speak of it in some manner every day — and at almost every hour of each day — to his wife or his servants. He would sit in his upper window, gazing from the hilltop over the trees to the Isle de la Resurrection; or he would wander down to the shore and stare and consider and stare. The thing obsessed him. He was an old man now, over seventy, but hardy and strong, clear of eye, steady of hand, vindictive and merciless yet to all who opposed him. In all his long, violent life, no one — and nothing — was known to have shaken him until some one, without reason, raised that house on the islet locally known as Resurrection Rock and left the house in Lucas Cullen's sight, closed and untenanted.

CHAPTER II

A STRANGER ARRIVES

THE Iron and Copper Country Express from Chicago for Lake Superior and Sault Sainte Marie — operated by the government upon this January day, 1919 — was nearing Escanaba almost on time in spite of the difficulty of making steam against a north wind and in a night temperature of twenty-two below zero. On time was four-forty in the morning; the hour made no difference to the passengers for the Keweenaw mines, as they could remain asleep while their Pullmans were switched to another engine which would speed them on to Marquette and Calumet; but the car which carried the passengers for the "Soo" stopped at Escanaba. Those who were in no hurry could sleep in the car till seven o'clock; but if one had urgent business in the north, it was necessary to rise and change cars in the frigid darkness to the train of day coaches which went on at ten minutes to five.

There were three people in the Escanaba car who were in such a hurry upon this particular morning: accordingly the porter's alarm clock went off at quarter past four, and the old negro sat up from his doze upon the smoking-room seat, shivering and feeling for the heat in the steam pipes and scratching his gray poll while he recounted who were to be called.

"Ol' Crusty — lo'ar five," he muttered to himself. "De captain — lo'ar nine; and Miss Ethel — dat's

right; she said shore to wake her," he assured himself, as though his memory in her respect was to be questioned, "in lo'ar four."

He arose and brushed up and, proceeding to lower five, he thrust in a hand and vigorously shook a fat, flabby thigh. The voice of a traveling man, who had catalogued himself with the porter as "old Crusty," put up the expected objection.

"Heh! What's matter?"

"Time to git up, suh!"

"Where are we?"

"Near to Bark River, boss."

"Huh! Why didn't you call me sooner?"

The porter passed on, without argument, to lower nine, where his hand through the curtains grasped a lithe, firm, muscular leg. "De captain"—brevetted by the porter a full grade higher than the single silver bar on his coat claimed—had been sound asleep; but he roused to the touch as to reveillé.

A dark, well-shaped head looked out, and a pleasant, vigorous voice, with that peculiar quality of maturity which comes to a young man who has been put in places of command, said:

"Hello! Oh; I remember. Thanks."

"Yo're very welcome, captain, suh; yo've half an hour befo' Escanaba."

"Just right," the young man said; his gray eyes looked up at the porter as he spoke. The negro smiled; the young man blinked a bit, drew back into his berth and began dressing. The porter, feeling better, returned to the other end of the car where was Miss Ethel's berth, and hesitated.

Ethel Carew was the whole name of the girl hidden by the curtains of lower four. She was a young lady

of twenty-two now; but the porter, who had been that "run" for many years, knew her when she was a child — a fair, violet-eyed, light-haired little girl — the west who traveled from Chicago with her mother and aunts — Mr. and Mrs. John Cullen or Mrs. Mrs. Lucas Cullen — to visit her grandfather and Florentin.

She had no mother, it developed; and her father, for some reason, never made the trip from Chicago to Escanaba but always was out home in Wyoming. She seldom had passed a year without a journey north and south along the lake — accompanied always by one of the Cullens and always traveling in luxury, with a drawing-room and a section for every extra member of the party.

This trip, however, was different. For Miss Ethel had appeared entirely unaccompanied upon the platform at Chicago last evening; and she had been carrying her own handbag. The porter, greeting her and seizing the handbag, had made at once for the drawing-room but only to find, as she followed him, that she had no ticket for lower four.

"Fix you up wid de drawing-room now, Miss Ethel," he whispered to her after the train had started, and the room at the end proved to be unsold.

She thanked him but said that a lower would do very well.

"Not even a section; jes' de lower," the old man ruminated as he moved reluctantly away; and he observed her during the evening with concerned interest. After her visit to the dining car — which was mighty brief for a young lady who looked so well and ought to have a good appetite — she asked for a table; and she took a great sheaf of worrisome looking papers from

her traveling bag and bothered over them all evening, finally writing two letters which she gave him and told him to be sure to mail at Fond du Lac. Then she went to bed, leaving a call for ten minutes after four!

When he polished her stout, little tan boots in the night, he observed that they were sound only by grace of resoling and mending; and her overcoat, which he had hung up for her, was of common, heavy wool. Vanished this year was the coat of soft fur which she had worn before in winter.

The porter tapped gently and unwillingly upon the wood partition at the head of lower four. The girl within, who had been lying awake beside her black, uncurtained window, looking up at the bright, winter stars, replied and instantly stirred herself; she drew down the shade, closed the window which she had left open at her feet and turned on her light. Whatever were the reflections and speculations which had been holding her the moment before, she dismissed them; and whereas she had scarcely been conscious of particularly observing the young man in section nine the evening before, this morning she noticed with interest that he also was getting up.

He was on his way home from France, she had heard him say last night in answer to a question; they were in southern Wisconsin then; so Ethel had not thought particularly about his destination. But this morning it was plain that his home must be in the sparsely settled land which she knew well, the region of lake and forest, bays and islands near the Straits; and the more she noticed him this morning, the more she wondered to which of the little towns and villages he was going. Last night, when she casually considered him, she had classified him as much the same sort of young man as

she usually met at her uncles' homes in Chicago,— young men who had possessed from birth assured places and definite advantages. But this morning, as the train neared Escanaba, and she and the "captain" stood together on the platform of the Pullman, she received quite a different impression; others had not insured advantage to this young man; he had had to do for himself, she was quite sure; he had known hard work and meager living here in the north.

She watched him as he rubbed the frost from the glass of the door and then, after looking about to see if she minded and receiving her shake of head in return, he stooped and lifted the platform stop and opened the Pullman door. The keen, cold wind swept in, scented of the forests, and away to the east lay, vaguely, the sheen of the ice-sheet over Green Bay. The "captain" drew a deep breath of air and stepped back a little, his shoulders pulling up and his hands unconsciously clenching at his sides. The train was pulling into the station now, and the porter appeared, carrying Ethel's handbag and the "captain's" suit case. The Soo train which was to continue the journey north was standing upon another track; and the porter immediately took the hand baggage to it. But Ethel walked on the platform beside the cars. The dark-haired young man had started to get on board but, after a question to the brakeman, he got down from the step and came forward near Ethel in search of the conductor.

"St. Florentin?" she heard the conductor repeat. "No; never heard of it."

"They hadn't in Chicago either," the young man said. "But I told them it was near the Straits, and they said that some one here would know."

"Not me; but I'm new here. Better try in the station," the conductor suggested.

"I've time?"

"Think so," the conductor said doubtfully.

Ethel turned about quickly and moved nearer. The evident fact that the young man did not know the place where he was going upset her theory of him; but he was asking about St. Florentin.

"I can tell you about St. Florentin," she offered.

"It's the name of an old mill town which hasn't been on the map for twenty years, I reckon. It's near Quesnel; you take this train and get off there; then it's ten miles across country."

The young man bared his head, and his pleasant gray eyes lighted a little with excitement.

"You know it! Thank you!" he said. "That's just what I wanted to know."

"If you're going to St. Florentin," Ethel continued to volunteer impulsively, "you must be going to see my grandfather."

"Why?"

"Because he's the only man — except his servants — who lives there. It's a deserted village, except for his house."

"His name is Bagley?"

"No; Cullen — Lucas Cullen."

"Then there's no one named Bagley?"

"Not that I've ever heard of."

"Or Carew?"

Ethel started a little. "My name is Carew."

"It is! Then your father's there — or is going to be there, Miss Carew?"

"My father has not been in St. Florentin for more than twenty years," Ethel said. "And now — my

father was with a regiment of engineers," she explained, more fully than she meant to a moment before. Knowledge about St. Florentin and about some one of her name seemed to be extremely important to this stranger. "He was killed last June."

The young man motioned quickly with a gesture of self-rebuke for his question. "I was stupid," he said, "thinking only about my affairs."

"You did not know about my father," Ethel returned in his defense.

"No; I didn't know he was your father; but his name — it was Philip Carew?"

"Yes."

"It came to me in a way which should have let me know."

She wanted to ask from whom it came, but he was inquiring further.

"There will be some one else there named Carew?"

"I am going there," Ethel said.

"And there is a place called the Resurrection? Or some church called that, perhaps? You will excuse me, Miss Carew; but I've been trying a long time to find some one who knows about St. Florentin."

"There's an island," Ethel said, "about half a mile off shore and not far from my grandfather's called Resurrection Rock."

"There is, then!" he cried, this information so amazingly stirring him that Ethel volunteered:

"It's rightly called Isle de la Resurrection. That's the old name from Jesuit and Indian times. But it's not much of an island; just a few acres, mostly rock."

"What is on the island; a town?"

"A house," Ethel replied. "Only one house."

"Do you know who lives there?"

"No one lives there. No one has ever lived in the house; it's been empty since it was built."

"That's strange!"

"It is — very."

"But surely you can tell me something more about that."

"Why, I would if I could; but that's all I know about the house on Resurrection Rock. Just that it's there and closed."

"Let's see," he said, and he was breathing fast, she saw, as he gazed down at her; he opened his coat and was fumbling in an inner pocket when the bell of the engine and the call of the brakeman warned that the train was to start. They had wandered together half a car length from the step; and, as the train moved, he seized her arm to steady her while she ran; he half lifted her to the car step and swung on after her. She entered the coach and, proceeding up the aisle until she found where the porter from the Pullman had left her bag, she sat down beside it. The dark-haired young man halted next her; he seemed, in the last few moments, to suddenly realize the strangeness of his questions; but she thought that he had, at first, an impulse to ask her something more. But he did not; he merely said formally, "Quite all right? Have everything?"

She answered affirmatively, and he went to the seat far forward where he found his suit case and where he dropped down and sat as though dazed by his discoveries of the last minutes. People were moving in the aisle, and they shut him from Ethel's view; when she glanced at him a little later, he seemed to be intently studying some document which he held before him,—a paper from his pocket, the girl thought.

He interrupted this study, suddenly, to turn about and look back at Ethel; and again she was sure that he wished to return to her. But he waited; and the next moment one of his neighbors seized the opportunity to talk with a soldier just back from France; the man sat down beside him; and, as they talked, a group of others of the war-curious gathered.

Ethel leaned back, still stirred a little from her share in the peculiar event which had so surprisingly agitated him. It was plain that the fact of there being a place in the peninsula called St. Florentin — and near it an island called Resurrection Rock — had been, at the same time, incredible and of overwhelming importance to him. Also he possessed her father's name in some connection with that place,— her father, whom he had supposed to be living but whose name, he recollected, had been mentioned in a way which should have made him guess that her father was dead. His errand certainly was altogether unusual and suggestive of developments, of what sort she could not yet figure, but which might most powerfully affect the outcome of her own visit to St. Florentin this day.

A difficult visit that was to be, even at its best, she knew; for she was bound to St. Florentin to ask her grandfather to do the thing which, of all conceivable acts, he was least likely to do: to forward her money to the amount of many hundred thousands of dollars without security and with little likelihood of receiving it back. Moreover, since her father's death, she realized that in a way she had become the inheritor of his quarrel with her grandfather.

What was the cause of the quarrel, Ethel never knew but she had known the fact of the trouble between grandfather and his brother John — and that

her own father was on the side against grandfather — as long as she had known anything. That was as long ago as when she and her father used to live in the old, rough, low-roofed ranch house near the north fork of the Powder River where, they told her, she had been born.

She must have been about five when she realized that the picture of "mamma" which was always in her father's room represented some one who not only had loved papa and Ethel but who also had loved a papa and mamma of her own and a sister, a good deal like her, who was living far away in a meaningless place called France and two brothers who had big houses in a city called Chicago which was as much bigger than Cheyenne as Cheyenne was bigger than Buffalo. Ethel's interrogations as to when she might see that lady who was like mamma, and also mamma's papa and mamma, evoked only indefinite replies at first; but at last her father took her on a train and traveled with her many days till they came to New York where Ethel had the unforgettable experience of living for a week aboard a huge boat while it carried her to a country not at all like Wyoming or New York, but which was called France and where she was told to call everything and every one by strange, interesting names.

She lived in a most wonderful house, called a château, with her aunt Cecilia and uncle Hilaire. Her father did not stay there at all but returned at once to Wyoming. At the end of the year, aunt Cecilia — who had no child of her own — brought her to New York where her father met her. Ethel remembered that first visit to France better than the second one three years later; aunt Cecilia was very pretty and

kind and interesting, but she had queer ideas, such as that a little girl might be afraid of big horses and that boys — not girls — climbed trees and that one should never go bare-headed into the sunlight. Ethel's later visit was memorable chiefly because it was at the château that she first met her uncle Lucas, of Chicago, and aunt Myra and her cousins, Julia and Bennet. They took Ethel back to America with them and brought her to Chicago; thus she met her uncle John and aunt Margaret and her grandfather and grandmother.

She was eight, then, and quite able to understand that such a delay in making the family acquaintance was not customary. And the separation of her father from her mother's immediate family was made more marked — rather than less so — by the circumstances that he was on terms of close friendship with her mother's cousin, Oliver, who, like her father, had as little as possible to do with the other Cullens. Cousin Oliver had to have business relations with them, as the whole family owned land and mines together; but he and his wife never visited at uncle Lucas's or uncle John's.

The cause was not to be inquired about in Chicago, Ethel understood. But at home in Wyoming, she used to ask her father about it all.

"Why, we couldn't get along together, dearie; so we stopped trying," was all he ever would say. "But you mustn't have trouble with your mother's people, whom you love and who love you."

Ethel recognized this for an evasion; and she believed that when she was older, he would tell her more. But if he had intended to, he did not; and Ethel found herself accustomed to accept the strange situation.

She had become fond of her people who showed her only their kindly and pleasant and generous side and who insisted upon claiming her for their own. Of course, after a time, she read and heard ugly reports about her grandfather; but she would not credit them. She thought he might have done some things which her father would not do; but she did not believe he had been as bad as people said. If he had, why didn't they put him in jail?

It was not until this last summer that she saw anything of the unpleasant side of her grandfather and of her uncles; for, after her father had been killed and her cousin Oliver had died, she had undertaken to carry out her father's agreements with his business associates and to meet his obligations.

The attempt had involved letters to her grandfather and visits to her uncles in search of aid; and quickly she came to realize that the quarrel between her father and them no longer was to be ignored but that it was to underlie all her own relations with them.

And how was that remarkable, unopened house upon the Rock — about which her grandfather talked so much — connected with them? Or with her? What was its meaning to them? She had never thought of it as having important meaning; it had seemed merely an intrusion, an impertinence. But the encounter with the young man who was going there and who had her father's name stirred new speculations.

CHAPTER III

"YOU MIGHT BE ANY ONE!"

GRAY streaks of dawn were spreading over the sky and making visible snow-clad land and, beyond, the frozen surface of the great lake. The train had passed the points of Green Bay and was running almost east along the upper shore of Lake Michigan and out upon the point of the peninsula with Superior barely two-score miles away to the north. The passengers who were getting on and off at the tiny, snow-covered towns were becoming more and more familiar looking to Ethel; they were little-town merchants making short business trips; lake fishermen; a group of men with guns evidently were farmers on a midwinter holiday, hunting for fox; there was a priest bound for St. Ignace and a couple of Indians neatly dressed in their black best, with white collars and with their hair barber-trimmed. Many of them evidently had had breakfast before taking the train; others brought papers of food which they opened. Ethel observed that two neighbors were sharing their packages with the young man who had asked about St. Florentin; and she took from her bag a box of sandwiches which she had brought from Chicago and also breakfasted.

Now the number of passengers in the car was diminishing; the stops were more widely separated; and the patches of cleared ground, where farming had been

done, became more and more infrequent. The train puffed past burnt-over ground with the black tops of stumps protruding from the snow or through bare-boughed forests of second growth through which the morning sun glared down, dazzling and glistening. Huge, blue shadows denoted the survival of clumps of pine and the regrowth of cedar.

"Quesnel!" the brakeman called when next he opened the car door, and Ethel stood up, buttoning her coat close to her throat. The dark-haired young man looked about interrogatively; she nodded, and he arose and also prepared to go out. When she stooped for her bag, he came quickly down the aisle and took the bag from her. The train halted beside a platform heaped high with snow and with a shelter shed in the middle from which white streaks of wood smoke wafted in the morning air.

They stepped down upon the platform, and the train immediately puffed on. No one else had left the cars at Quesnel; and no one had got on. There seemed to be no one at the station just now except a middle-aged Indian man in mackinaw coat and cap and with brown leggings who stepped from the shelter, carrying a pair of skis and with another pair, smaller and newer, strapped to his back.

"B'jou," he said to Ethel.

"Good morning, Asa," she hailed, offering her gloved hand. "Every one well at St. Florentin?"

"Everybody," the Indian asserted. "Big snow last night again. Nobody breaks road yet." He was explaining his appearance with the skis. "Sam perhaps try to go to Rest Cabin with team later, maybe. Got to walk from here now." His eyes shifted from her to the stranger.

"Oh, I expected to ski over," Ethel said. "Can I send word to grandfather I'm here, or is the wire down?"

"All right to Rest Cabin," the Indian said, not shifting his glance from the stranger. "All down this side last night."

"This is Asa Redbird," Ethel said to the soldier, "who lives near my grandfather and who is good enough to help us out sometimes."

"My name is Barney Loutrelle." The young man completed the introduction, speaking to the Indian as he offered his hand.

"B'jou," Redbird said.

"B'jou."

"Where you want to go?" the Indian asked with more interest.

"With us, Asa," Ethel supplied quickly. "Can you get him skis or shoes?"

"Yes," the Indian said. "You have these ones," he offered his skis. "Sled goes over to break road all way this afternoon. I come then, or get shoes over there." He motioned with his head, almost imperceptibly, toward a couple of houses far back from the track where smoke was showing. "No hurry about me."

Loutrelle put his hand on the skis doubtfully. "You want me to take them?" he asked half to the Indian, half to Ethel. The readiness of Asa's offer had surprised her a little; but Barney Loutrelle had spoken to Redbird in just the right manner. And he had mentioned his Christian name; Indians like to know Christian names — and to use them. It was plain that Barney Loutrelle, though he was not familiar with this particular locality, knew the Indians of the north.

"I think Asa doesn't mind waiting for the sled," Ethel said. "Then you'll keep my bag with you, Asa?"

The Indian moved her bag with his foot and set it aside. He unstrapped the skis from his back and, stooping, placed the skis to Ethel's feet.

"You want I should take your satchel?" he asked of Loutrelle when he straightened.

"No, thanks. I'll take it along. But if you don't want those straps —"

The Indian measured his shoulder with his glance, lengthened the straps and secured the suit case at Barney's side.

"All right?" Redbird asked.

"All right."

"B'jou."

"B'jou," Barney said, closing the transaction between them.

"I be there," Redbird said to Ethel, "about four o'clock, I think. Good-by."

"Good-by," Ethel said. "Thank you very much for coming for me."

The Indian picked up Ethel's bag and moved into the shed from which he had appeared. Ethel looked up at her companion and smiled a little.

"I seem to have selected you for my escort," she said.

"I'm very much obliged to you," he returned. "Shall we go now — that way?"

"Yes."

He cut staffs for them and set off a little ahead of her as she purposely stayed back to observe him. He knew how to ski and was not a bit clumsy about it; but he had not skied for some time, she thought.

He needed a few moments to get the feel of the long runners upon the snow.

"Not too fast, am I?" he asked.

"Oh, no!" She caught pace with him, breathing deeply and evenly. It was near noon and, though still cold, much warmer than in the early morning; the air was clear, and the wind, which had blown a gale during the night, had quieted almost to a calm.

"We go due south, they told me on the train," he said, glancing ahead.

"Yes: to St. Florentin; and to the Rock too, until a fork about a mile this side of grandfather's, where you take a road more to the east."

She remembered that he had not definitely said that he was bound for the island; but the visible impulse which unconsciously quickened his stride when she again mentioned the Rock revealed the fact to her.

"The farmer who keeps the key to the house on Resurrection Rock lives at the end of that road, I understand," he said.

"The road goes to his house; his name's Wheedon; he lives on the shore."

"Of course the lake is frozen over clear out to the Rock."

"Surely," Ethel said. She had been aware that he had been asking questions about the locality — and particularly about the Rock — from the people on the train. She had told him that she knew no more about the house on the Rock; nevertheless she had expected that now he would ask her more about it. Indeed, she was certain that he wanted to; but the constraint which had held him away on the train still influenced him; and it was her question which first forced itself out.

"How did you hear the name of my father, Mr. Loutrelle?" she asked.

"Oh!" he said; and she recognized, as she looked up at him, that he had been expecting the question and had been trying, unsuccessfully, to be ready for it. "That came up, in England — in London, Miss Carew, when I was in France."

It was plain that he realized he had replied incoherently; so Ethel waited.

"In November, about two months ago," he added.

"When my father's name came up in London? How?"

"In a letter to me, Miss Carew."

"I see. You knew one of his men!"

"No; it wasn't like that — not at all like that. It happened just before the armistice, Miss Carew. Huston Adley was in London —" He was in difficulties with the telling; but now he did not want to stop, as he hesitated and looked down at her. "We're not going too fast?" he asked.

"Not now," Ethel assured. They had, indeed, almost halted as they entered the woods, keeping to the course of the snow-obiterated road winding between the trees. And, as Ethel watched her companion, suddenly she better comprehended the nature of the constraint which had held him. What he had to say was far too serious and personal to be discussed in the publicity and amid the interruptions of the train. She realized that he had been counting upon — or at least hoping for — some such chance as this of talking to her alone.

"Your father's name came to me first in a letter from London, Miss Carew," he said. "I think, after all" — he referred aloud thus to some debate which

he had had with himself — "you'd better see it first. But don't — suppose anything from it, please."

He thrust his hand into a side pocket and drew out a square, white envelope with English stamp and postmark and with the English strip — "Opened by the Censor." It was addressed to Barney Loutrelle, Lieutenant of Infantry in a certain American regiment in France. He handed it to her, and she pulled off her heavy gloves and drew out the single folded sheet and read, in vigorous, youthful handwriting:

Nov. 7, '18.

Dear Barney:

One named Philip Carew is here and keeps asking for you. Do you know him? He says you don't; but he knows you; or at least seems to have some mighty important business for you.

If this sweet little altercation ceases soon, I'd advise you to come and try to learn what he wants. If you can't, perhaps you can get him there — Philip Carew, the name. Try it and see.

Yours,

Hus.

Ethel's breath stopped; she stood holding the letter with trembling hand while she examined the postmark which, like the date written upon the page, was November 7, 1918.

"My father!" she said. "He was killed in June!"

"Yes; you told me so," Loutrelle replied gently.

"You don't mean that there was a mistake? My father's alive and —"

"No," Loutrelle denied quickly. "No; no; you mustn't think of that. I told you not to suppose anything from this."

"Then, of course, this doesn't refer to the Philip Carew who was my father," Ethel said, better controlling herself but yet frightened. At what, she did not know. "Does it? Do you think that it does, Mr. Loutrelle?" she demanded, when he did not answer. Then, "Who is this Hus? Did he know my father?"

"I don't think so. He's a friend of mine — a Canadian from Edmonton. He was a lieutenant in my battalion. He'd been wounded and sent to Blighty where he lived with his cousins, London people —"

"Do you think this refers to my father, Mr. Loutrelle?"

"That's what we have to work out together, Miss Carew; and we must go on," he commanded her with that concerned gentleness with which he had spoken before. He reclaimed his letter; and she closed her little hands, holding one white fist and then the other to her lips and blowing upon them before thrusting them into her gloves. He moved a little and waited for her; she came forward beside him, and they proceeded over the smooth, glistening snow.

"Do you know Boyne across there?" he asked, his gray eyes studying her as he motioned with his head in the direction of the distant lake.

"You mean the little town —"

"They call it a city."

"Yes; I know — on the other side. I've been there. What's that to do with my father?"

"If I knew, I'd tell you right out," he assured. "But as it is, the only way I see is to explain how that letter — and what followed — came to me; and that involves a good deal of talking about —"

"What?"

"Myself," he said simply.

She glanced up at him quickly. The speculation concerning him, which she had been forming during the morning, and her thought that his errand to St. Florian was likely to influence her affairs, seemed better founded than she had guessed. He, too, was feeling an association of their interests, an association not yet to be defined but not powerless for that.

"Do you want to tell me something of your father, Miss Carew?" he asked.

"You mean where he lived? That was in Wyoming — we had a ranch once on the Powder River; later we — my father and myself, Mr. Loutrelle; my mother died when I was three — we moved to Sheridan, and he became interested in a large number of development projects. I know a good deal about them and what he did until he went to France a year and a half ago; he had irrigation and water-power works planned in Wyoming and Montana and other parts of the west. Is that what you wanted to know?"

"Partly. Then he wasn't connected particularly with this section?"

"Only through me — or my mother's family."

"Or with Charlevoix County across the lake?"

"Not at all; why?"

"That's the only place I ever was, before I went into the war — the section about twelve miles inland and six or seven miles this side of Boyne. You know that particular part, Miss Carew?"

"They've farms there, haven't they? Then your people lived —"

"I don't know where my own people lived, or what they were," Loutrelle interrupted quickly. "And the part I'm thinking of isn't farms. It's much like this,"

he glanced about at the trees, "second growth woods, only a bit older; and Indians like Asa Redbird."

"You mean —"

"I lived with them; yes, Miss Carew. Until I was seven years old. I thought I was an Indian myself. Some Chippewas — a good man, Azen Mabo and his wife — had me. I don't remember ever thinking that they were my parents; I guess I had some sort of memory of other Indians who had me before. But I can remember the day Azen told me that I was white."

He said this quite without bitterness, simply as a statement of a fact; but Ethel saw his lips press tightly together, involuntarily; his eyes gazed vacantly far away, and something within Ethel's breast seemed to tug and draw taut. Consciously as she observed him, she was looking for mark of Indian in his features — for a sallowness of skin or flattening of cheek bone. The glare of the noon sun and the dazzle from the snow gave a light to exaggerate any coarseness or blunting of feature; but it showed him only fairer of skin and with purer proportions in his face than he had seemed to possess before. And, unconsciously, her gaze gave him to her now as a little boy in poor, ragged clothing — a fair-skinned, good-looking little boy with that same pleasant, likable look in his gray eyes — standing in an Indian hut in woods like these and looking up at an Indian, like Asa, who was telling him that he was white.

"Azen told me he got me from another Indian — a man named Noah Jo, who had had a boat and moved around a good deal," Loutrelle went on. "He didn't find out much about me; for Noah Jo was sick when he sent for Azen and died about the time Azen got there. Azen took, with me, Noah Jo's rifle and boat

and gear and some other things; one of them was a ring which Noah Jo said went with me. Azen showed it to me then, Miss Carew; and years later, he gave it to me. Would you like to see it?"

"Please," Ethel said, that strange tug pulling at her harder. What he was saying to her was no oft-repeated or cheaply told tale, she was sure; he was bringing himself to relate these circumstances of his life only after a struggle with his pride. And she could guess how hard and bitter must have been the building of that pride by the little boy, a white boy in the Indian shack in the woods.

He took off a glove and, putting his hand inside of his coat, he felt in some secure inner pocket and took out a little chamois bag from which he drew a ring, a woman's ring, Ethel saw, when she received it. It was a small but remarkable ring of gold, without jewels but decorated in a beautiful and stately manner. It was an old ring, not marked with a date, but of a fashion which suggested a century, or two centuries, gone. Ethel could not visualize it alone upon a woman's hand; its original possessor, she thought, certainly had counted this only one among many ornaments for her slender fingers. And the image it called up caused Ethel to glance up at its present owner with new estimation which he met by color deepening upon his cheek, though his eyes met hers steadily.

"What did that mean to you?" she asked, holding it a moment longer before giving it back.

"Nothing much at first, that I remember," he said. "I was white; but for a while I went with the Indians more than with the whites. Indian boys and girls, as well as white, attended the same little schoolhouse on

the Charlevoix road. I was either Barney Mabo or some people called me Barney with the Mabos, giving me no last name of my own. When I got older, I used to do chores for the white farmers around; and they treated me like white. One of them got me a job in Boyne City so I could go to high school. That was when Azen gave me the ring; he knew I wasn't coming back to him — to stay. He never showed the ring to any one else — except maybe to some of his Indian friends. I never did, either, Miss Carew."

He considered it for a moment, holding it in the palm of his bare hand; they were proceeding slowly side by side. "Being a woman's ring," he said, "I supposed it was my mother's — whoever she was and however she happened to give it, and me, to Noah Jo. But it didn't seem to me that I could do anything about finding her, except by accident. So I just kept the ring and tried not to think too much about her. Being busy helped. You see," he smiled a little in his retrospection as he put the ring away, "it wasn't any absolute cinch going through Boyne high school and supporting yourself. Then the war came along; and I went."

"In 1917?"

"I got in our own army then; but I had the luck to go just after the Marne, with the Canadians."

"Oh! Did you? That was fine!"

"I had the luck to be pinged a little the next fall — a 'cushy blighter', you know?"

"Yes; a wound taking you back to London."

"That's it. I spent the winter of 1915-1916 there, Miss Carew. I was just a kid, not hurt a lot but temporarily on crutches, though I could get about pretty well. England was laying herself out for the

Canadians. We'd been having our big losses together almost everybody had some one who'd gone 'west and most of 'em couldn't realize it. London — and all England, Miss Carew — was full of people trying to get in touch with fellows who'd been reported killed — just their names brought home on a government telegram and maybe a package of letters returned later."

"Yes; I know," Ethel said quietly, her breath catching a little.

"So it wasn't strange that a good many people were trying to find out more."

"You mean trying to trace men reported killed, who might merely have been missing?"

"Yes; they did that; but more generally they accepted the truth of the government report but tried to reach their dead."

"Oh!"

"You see 'Raymond' had recently been killed —"

"You mean —"

"Sir Oliver Lodge's son; yes, Miss Carew. His father and mother and friends were receiving messages which they published and which they were sure must be from him; and thousands of other people — not a crazy lot but scientists and lawyers and editors and judges and kings' counselors and hard-headed merchants and all sorts of Englishmen — were getting communications which they believed must be from their men who'd been killed."

"Oh!" Ethel murmured again. She did not hear what he said during the next moments. Her thoughts had gone from him to the letter he had shown her; she was rehearsing the words which referred to her father. "Oh!"

They were still following, mechanically and without effort, the wide course of the old St. Florentin road which lay two feet or three feet or five — according to the depth of the new drifts — below the glistening crust of the snow. The air had become so calm that the midday sun was dispensing more appreciable warmth. Ethel could feel it mitigating the cold of the air upon her cheek; she could see it beginning to melt the surface of the tiny snow ridges rounded up on the lower boughs of the trees. The sun failed to quite dissolve the snow, succeeding only in making it fluid enough to refreeze as ice on the bottom of the twigs and mantle the boughs more closely.

It was quite comfortable pushing along on skis; indeed, Ethel felt warm and loosened her coat collar. They had passed no one; and except for scars on the drifts here and there which probably marked Asa Red-bird's trail to Quesnel, they saw no mark of human presence. Bird tracks patterned a powdery drift; a dog — probably the property of one of Asa's neighbors back in the woods — had crossed the road. Once a shadow flapped and passed obliquely before them; and Ethel, gazing up, saw a hawk high in the sky.

"... talked a lot about it," Loutrelle was saying when next she was conscious of hearing. "But I had no particular reason for being interested. I'd lost some pals, of course; but we never talked in the trenches of caring to communicate with them. All that sort of thing was back home in England; and it seemed silly or queer, what I'd learned of it from Huston. His aunt and his cousins — the girls — went in for it hard; they'd lost their men, you see. They were all sure they were getting messages back and forth and could find out all sorts of things. They had a

'sitting' one evening at their house when I was with them for dinner, and it occurred to me, if there's anything in this rot, why not try to find out about myself. So I sat with them and asked them to inquire about my mother and father. I'd not told any one of them — even Hus, then — anything except that I had no parents; and I received in reply the fooliest sort of tosh. 'There is some one here who is loved by another — a mother — very distant,' he continued, imitating another's voice. "'There is a dark-eyed, fatherly man who also loves him. They do not know where he is.'

"Well, Miss Carew," he ceased to imitate. "It was worse than gipsy fortune-telling or palm-reading. But having got me to try, the Adleys wouldn't leave me alone till I'd tried other mediums, and if variety in my life was what I wanted, they gave it to me.

"I'd supposed that my mother probably was dead; and if there was anything at all in these séances which so many important people believed in, I thought I could at least find out whether she really was living or dead. But when I asked one medium, I'd be told she was living; the next would say she was dead. About my father likewise. Rot or nothing. Then I returned to duty and forgot all about it at the front till I was laid up in London again for a few weeks ending last October. Hus Adley, who'd finally lost an arm and was permanently on duty in London, had gone quite over to the civilian enthusiasms, and he dragged me around to sittings in a private house on Cavendish Square. You know London, Miss Carew?"

"I know Cavendish Square," Ethel said.

"It's of no great importance except, you see, the

neighborhood wasn't one where you'd look for cheap frauds."

"No. What happened?"

"Several affairs which startled other people."

"But yourself?"

"Well, I got a few surprises, too."

"Of what sort?"

"Facts about myself instead of foolishness. Somebody connected with that affair — I'm not saying that the information came from spirits — but somebody in that room seemed to know just about everything concerning me. And I found out that my father was living but my mother was dead."

"How did you find that out?"

"At the sitting."

"But you said that at other sittings you'd been told such things before," Ethel objected. "And you thought it was rot."

"Because the other things told me at the same time about matters which I knew were foolish. But this time — well, I admit several shocks. The medium told me little details about myself for years back, especially about my life over here. She knew about my ring and Azen Mabo and Noah Jo; about my friends in Boyne high school — people I'd never mentioned to any one."

"How did she know?"

"That's what gave me a jump. Of course, she might have learned those things, if she'd taken the trouble, or if Hus had sent a staff of detectives over here. Everything could have been learned naturally."

"Then why didn't you think it was?"

"I haven't said it was learned unnaturally; but it was such a mixed lot of facts, Miss Carew. It

seemed to me a most enormous waste of time for any one to have sent over here collecting all those facts about me. I'm normal, Miss Carew; I don't prefer weird explanations. But I admit I walked the streets of London that night. For, you see, one of two things must be true; some one dead, but able to communicate with me, knew a lot about me, and might tell more; or the some one was living; and then —"

"What?"

"I couldn't figure his — or her — reasons."

"For?"

"Communicating with me that way."

"So you believed —"

"Nothing yet. But of course I went back to the same woman — alone this time — the next afternoon."

"And you got?"

"Nothing at all."

"Oh!"

"That rather let me down. The next day I had to go back to France. I was at the front; but Hus stayed in London and kept trying to find out more for me, and on November seventh wrote me the letter I showed you."

"About my father!"

"Of course I'd no idea who he was then or why he wanted me."

"But what did you do?"

"Nothing, right away. We were fighting hard until the eleventh."

"Of course; but then?"

"I was kept with the battalion. I had more time to myself; but no chance to go to London."

"Or to try to 'get' my father where you were, Mr.

Loutrelle? I suppose that meant through a sitting in France."

"To tell the truth, it seemed all silly stuff to me again, Miss Carew; the jump I'd got from that one good evening had worn off. Then I had the luck, on the twelfth of December, to get a special discharge. I wired Hus in London that I was coming and we'd have a good time. But he wired back not to come to England but to get passage to America; said he was writing in explanation. This letter came two days later."

He halted again and put his hand into his coat pocket, drawing out an envelope similar to the other and with English stamp and postmark. Ethel recognized the same vigorous handwriting. Taking out the letter, she turned her back to the sun and read:

Dear Barney:

If you've never taken anything on trust before, take this from me, old top. Beat it for home — particularly to the town of St. Florentin in Northern Michigan. Do you know it?

If you don't, find it! It's not on any map I've looked at, I admit; but it's somewhere near a Strait which must be Mackinac.

Now I'll not tell you why I'm ordering this. You'd say tosh and rot; but go! Particularly find a place named Resurrection or perhaps it's a house or a town near the water. Wait around. There'll be some one named Bagley there and Carew — not Philip Carew, I've mentioned before, unless there's another; maybe a relation.

You're to tell Bagley you're Dick and you'll take things over. Now I don't know what this refers to; and neither will you, probably. But it's all I can find

out. I don't think you'll learn more except by going. Only believe me, if I were you, I'd go at once.

Hrs.

P.S. You may have to look out when you get there. But you can see to yourself.

Ethel looked up. "Did anything follow this?"

"In explanation from Hus? No."

"Then what did you do?"

"Started.— It must look silly to you, I suppose. But the war was over; I was let out. I had nowhere to go except to Hus — and he didn't want me — or else come back here. So I came here."

He was now dissembling, she knew, the effect upon himself of his experience in London and this letter.

"I'd have come, in your place, I think," Ethel said quietly. "Though I suppose that your friend means that he obtained this information by — unusual methods."

"Yes."

"From my father?"

"He doesn't say that."

"But you think it."

"A good many times since leaving France, I've thought that the whole business was a hoax, Miss Carew, especially when I got all the way to Chicago and even to Escanaba without finding any one who had ever heard of St. Florentin."

"But now?"

He looked down, his gray eyes challenging hers honestly and seriously.

"What do you think, Miss Carew?"

"Well, certainly there is a St. Florentin — and you didn't know it in December."

"No; nor till this morning. But that's not denying there might be some one in London who knew it."

"Then there's Resurrection Rock."

"To which the same applies," he said.

"But that couldn't apply to me, Mr. Loutrelle. No one in London in December could have known I was to go to St. Florentin. I didn't know it myself, then."

"But you often came; some one might know that."

"Yes; but our meeting this morning —"

"Was a coincidence, of course, Miss Carew. But I've been thinking a good deal about it, too. Against it, there's one wild shot, anyway. There's no Bagley about."

"No."

"Well, what do you think?"

She made no immediate answer but gazed down at the letter which she reread before returning it to him.

"What do you suppose it means; 'Tell Bagley you're Dick and you'll take things over'?" she asked at last.

"I thought 'Dick' might be my real name. I just had the name Barney from Noah Jo. I took Loutrelle for myself from a man I liked when I started high school."

He put his letter away and proceeded for several moments in silence. They were climbing a slightly higher and steeper hillside than any they had yet encountered in that rolling forest land; and the surface of the snow showed the fresh imprint of snowshoes distinct from the scratches of Asa Redbird's trail. Where these new footprints had come in, neither Ethel nor Loutrelle had noticed. Glancing back, they observed the marks as far back as they could see.

After a few minutes, the trail left the road abruptly and vanished between the trees to the south.

"Some Indian must be making the round of his traps," Ethel commented. "We're coming to where used to be an old lumber camp for the woodmen," she said a little later, as the gray walls of old shacks appeared through the trees to the right. "No one's there now, but we keep one cabin sound and stocked with firewood."

"Oh, yes," Loutrelle recollected. "Redbird's Rest Cabin where you're to wait for the team."

He identified it easily out of the little group of deserted shacks which they approached. In addition to its being in better repair, a wire reached from the south and then stretched across the road and into the woods to the north, undoubtedly the telephone wire which the Indian had mentioned as all right from St. Florentin to the cabin and down beyond. Loutrelle pushed ahead and thrust open the weather-beaten door. He removed his skis and Ethel's also and stood them against the wall. They stamped down upon a dry, board floor. Loutrelle closed the door, and a single, rudely glazed window lighted the interior which was perhaps twelve feet square with an old bunk on one side; upon the other was a boulder fireplace with a couple of benches before it. A telephone instrument was upon the wall. There was dry wood and brush under the chimney, and Loutrelle struck a match and started a blaze which swiftly roared into red flame.

Ethel bent and swung out an iron crane set in the fireplace. She took a battered kettle from a shelf which held, besides, a few cheap dishes and a couple of tin boxes and cans. When Loutrelle looked about, she handed him the kettle, and he filled it with snow

and set it over the fire. He had flung his suit case from his shoulder and tossed away his cap and opened his coat. Ethel unbuttoned her coat, too, and sat down upon one of the benches before the fire. Loutrelle did not sit down.

"Tired?" he asked her.

"I hadn't thought so; but it's nice to wait here."

"Yes. How far've we come?"

"About four miles. The road follows the ridges beyond here, and the snow's never so deep. A team can usually get this far."

Loutrelle turned to the fire and stood on the other side of the hearth, his hands outstretched, absently gazing into the flames. Ethel from her seat watched his face boldly, so deeply was he sunk in thought. She could understand so much better than a few hours earlier the marks which struggle and self-discipline had left upon him during the process in which he had grown from the little white boy living with the Indians to the young man he now was. She could see, too, and more plainly, the signs of good heritage in the pleasing contour and poise of his dark-haired head, the good proportion of his features, the curve of his lips, the clean turn of his chin; and — what she had not noticed before — his hands. His were strong, very masculine hands, and it was evident that they had worked a great deal, but they were small-boned and excellently shaped. They brought to Ethel's mind again the image of his ring — the ring which Noah Jo had said was his — upon a woman's hand, white, graceful and beautiful.

Ethel bent toward him impulsively. "Why do you say that it would have been an enormous waste of time for some one to have sent to collect facts about you?"

she asked almost belligerently. "You — you might be — any one!"

He swung about suddenly, one hand going to the pocket where he had put away the ring.

"I?" he said, hot blood suffusing his face. "Sometimes I've dreamed about being — some one, Miss Carew; then I've thought what that meant and —" He did not finish but jerked up, as though shaking himself out of his realm of speculation and into the actual. "At Quesnel you wanted to telephone to your grandfather," he reminded, glancing at the instrument beside the chimney. "Redbird said the line was working this far."

"Yes," Ethel said but arose only to take down cups and a stoneware pot from the shelf. She found tea leaves in one of the cans and a few crackers in another; he moved a bench to act as table beside the fire, and she spread their board.

The single window in the cabin was to the south, and the sun was shining through in a golden square upon the floor; the fire was crackling in leaping red flames; and, as Loutrelle removed the kettle from the crane and poured the boiling water into the teapot, steam rose cozily from the spout.

"You like tea?" Ethel said, looking up. "I didn't ask you."

"I was three years with the Canadians," he replied.

She laughed, reasonlessly but happily. He smiled in the pleasant way he had and, without waiting for the formality of other invitation, he sat down upon the bench beside her, — not close to her nor so far away that his care to avoid closeness was awkward.

Outside the cabin, there was no sound or movement; not a slight stir of breeze remained. The tracery

of a twig which intruded in shadow upon the sunlit square was sharp and motionless as a purple, painted line; the winter midday was tranquil with a white, cold languor; and the cabin, with its warmth within the walls, did not dispel but instead increased the sense of the desertion and remoteness of this still spot.

Whereas only a few hours earlier Ethel had been restless to reach St. Florentin as quickly as possible, there to enter upon the effort with her grandfather which she had come — almost hopelessly — to spend, now the impulse of her impatience had passed. Until this encounter with Barney Loutrelle, she had been absolutely alone — unassociated with any one and unsupported — in her expedition to St. Florentin. She had been conscious of coming to her grandfather to wage with him a combat involving people whom he knew but of whose very names she was ignorant and involving affairs of which she had no understanding; and she had felt her desperate disadvantage. But, — well, she could not yet define in what respect she felt the disadvantage to be less from having met Barney Loutrelle, but she felt it; and now, when he asked her in more detail about the people at St. Florentin and about the Rock, she answered him fully and almost without reserve. She wished to delay here to think and — as he had put it — to better "work out" affairs together with him before even speaking with her grandfather over the telephone.

But after a few minutes, the bell rang.

It was a sharp, imperative ring; and, as the wire was down everywhere except to St. Florentin, Ethel knew that call came from her grandfather's. The curtness of the ring indeed gave her instantly a vision of her grandfather standing at the telephone instru-

ment fastened upon the wall of his room and jerking the bell handle. He had been ringing at intervals earlier, Ethel guessed; and he was sure that by this time some one ought to answer.

She took down the receiver and replied.

"Ah! Ethel!" her grandfather's voice recognized her with irritable welcome. "So you did come, did you?"

Ethel made the obvious response and inquired about him and about her grandmother, inquiries which he ignored.

"You're at the cabin at last, I suppose."

"Yes, grandfather."

"Asa with you all right?"

"No, grandfather; Asa stayed at Quesnel."

"He did, did he? Then you're alone there?"

Ethel scarcely hesitated before replying "No"; but her grandfather noticed the hesitation.

"No!" he mocked her quickly. "Why didn't you want to tell me that; who's with you? How many?"

"Just one, grandfather."

"Who's he?"

"A Mr. Loutrelle, grandfather."

"What name?"

Ethel said it again and heard her grandfather repeat it to himself, before deciding, evidently, that he did not know it. Then he demanded of her:

"Who's a Mr. Loutrelle? A lawyer you're bringing, or one of your creditors?"

"No, grandfather; he's —" she hesitated, coloring a little, as she turned as she heard Loutrelle moving. He had pulled the door open and now he stepped out quickly, closing the door behind him to let her

continue her talk without being overheard. But all she said now was, "He's an officer just returned from France."

"Oh; friend of yours!" her grandfather's voice charged. "Why didn't you say in your wire yesterday you were bringing him?"

"I wasn't. I just met him on the train this morning, grandfather. I'm not bringing him there now. We just came this far together, that's all. He's on his way to Resurrection Rock."

"Where?"

"To the Rock, grandfather."

There was delay now at the other end of the wire; and Ethel, as she waited, could hear the mumble—but not the words—of the old man talking to himself. The undertone brought to her another image of him; she knew how he looked and when it was that he thus muttered to himself. It was when something suddenly disturbed him or when he had been under a strain for some time but was required to make a decision; he would try over phrases to himself before speaking aloud. That was what he was doing at this moment,—trying over a sentence which he discarded and now trying another.

"No one goes to the Rock, Ethel," he said at last aloud. "If he doesn't know that, surely you must have told him. Bring him here with you, my dear. I would like to see him. Bring him here with you; do you understand?"

"I understand, grandfather," Ethel said.

"Bring him here with you," the old man ordered again; and Ethel heard him hang up the receiver. Then the bell rang once, curtly. It was the rural line custom of "ringing off" after ending a conver-

sation. Her grandfather had forgotten that the line was down everywhere except to the cabin.

Ethel crossed to the door and, opening it, looked for Loutrelle. He had tramped off through the snow, without putting on his skis, and evidently was exploring one of the old, dilapidated shacks on the other side of the road. She thought for a moment that she would call to him; then the telephone bell jangled again and, answering, she heard her grandfather's voice informing her that Sam Green Sky had left with a team more than two hours ago and ought to get through to the cabin soon. This time he did not ring off after hanging up.

She realized that he had called the first time to tell her about Sam but what she had told him had upset him so that he forgot; she knew that, in general, the Rock — with the presence of the large, empty house — was an object of disquiet for him. But this day something more particular must have occurred. Her grandfather had been perturbed when he first telephoned, and the news that a Mr. Loutrelle was going to the Rock simply had increased his agitation. But what could have happened up here?

The lines of Barney Loutrelle's letter recurred to her. "Beat it for home — particularly to the town of St. Florentin in Northern Michigan!" His friend had urged in his emphatic way, "Go! Believe me, if I were you, I'd go at once."

That surely indicated something about to happen; and then the postscript:

"You may have to look out when you get there. But you can see to yourself."

Ethel returned to the door and found Loutrelle on his way back to the cabin.

"Sam Green Sky, an Indian, is coming to meet us with a team," she announced. "I told my grandfather that you were with me, and he invited you to St. Florentin."

She was aware that he must have overheard the first of her talk over the telephone, and from it he must have inferred the nature of her grandfather's challenges; and she was conscious too, that she repeated the invitation little more than mechanically.

"Do you want me to go with you?" he asked her directly.

"No," she replied frankly. "That is, if I were you, I'd go right out to Resurrection Rock."

She had not considered at all what she said before she spoke; her words — as one's words sometimes do — had surprised her by betraying a feeling which had not yet formed itself in her thought. She did not want Barney Loutrelle to go to St. Florentin; but yet she had no reason for not wanting it than that her grandfather did want it, and did not want him to go to the Rock.

"You may have to look out when you get there." She found the warning from Loutrelle's friend iterating itself again to her.

"Let's go on then," Loutrelle was saying, and he scooped up snow, carrying it into the cabin and putting out the fire. He laid a new one while Ethel rinsed their cups in the hot water from the kettle and put the dishes away.

"Who uses this place?" Loutrelle asked now. "Just your family?"

"Oh; no. Any one at all. It's never locked, and we've always something here."

"For Indians?"

"Yes; they use it whenever they want to; every one who knows about it does. Why?"

"Some one slept in that shack across there — under hardly half a roof and with no door," Loutrelle explained. "I could tell because the fellow burrowed out the snow for his blanket; and he couldn't have had any fire."

"Let me see," Ethel said.

He strapped on her skis and, stepping into his own, he led her to the ruin across the road, where it was plain, as he said, that some one recently had hollowed out the snow and laid blanket for sleeping; also the some one had eaten there, leaving crumbs of white bread. He had come during the night or, at least, before the snow and the wind ceased; for his trail to the shack was covered; but he had departed that morning on snowshoes, upon which he had progressed badly and directly away from the road into the woods. It was partly from observation of his clumsiness with snowshoes that Ethel said:

"He couldn't have belonged about here. Probably he came over from the railroad to hunt and got lost and just found this place in the dark. He was after fox, maybe."

"I bet he woke up cold," Loutrelle said. "I should think this morning he'd at least have gone over to have a look at the cabin."

Ethel moved away without offering to answer. She did not believe that the man who had slept there in the snow burrow was a hunter; she did not form any idea of who or what he might be except that certainly he was a stranger in the neighborhood. And now a queer, shivery thought possessed her. She did not speak it; but Loutrelle did.

"Wonder if he might be Bagley?"

The sun, only a little lower to the west, was glaring down upon the snow, unclouded and still dazzlingly bright as they proceeded upon the way of the old St. Florentin wood road. It had warmth yet, and all the land was glistening and still, in nowise altered in prospect from the hour before until, as the road reached the top of a ridge which was higher than those which lay to the south, the smooth ice-sheet over Lake Huron came into view, reaching away green and dark in streaks where the wind had blown away the snow and then white and dark and white again to the dim, distant, cold gray-blue of the winter horizon. Ragged points — capes and tiny peninsulas — thrust into the ice-sheet as though trying to reach but as though broken and cast back by a great black rock which rose abruptly out of and above the ice half a mile from shore.

The western rise of the rock, upon which the sun was shining, seemed sheer and towering; only about the base, where the lake had tossed up heaps and hummocks of ice, and upon the top had snow gathered. The northern side of the rock seemed less precipitous, but that was mostly in shadow, so that one could not well make out even the limits of the island. Sometimes it seemed half shadow, half rock; sometimes all rock, without shadow, defying the sun. Desolate itself, it dominated desolation — lifeless rock and ice and snow unspiced by moving thing. Even the gulls which might have visited its crannies in summer or now, if the water were open, must have gone; for as far as the eyes could see, about the island and beyond it, lay the frozen shroud over the lake.

"Resurrection Rock!" Ethel said, gazing at it with

no need to point as they stood upon the top of the ridge.

Loutrelle nodded, his eyes narrowing a little as he tried to see it better through the glare. "There is a house upon it?" he asked incredulously.

"Yes; near the south end; part of that snow upon which the sun is shining must be on the roof of the house."

"But why's the house there?" he demanded. He had asked this before but not with the present amazement.

"Of course it's quite different in summer."

"But you said it's never been occupied, summer or winter."

"No; never."

"Except possibly," he said, glancing at her and away to the house again, "by the dead."

He spoke in a queer, neutral tone, neither quite seriously nor at all lightly. She had never heard any one say "the dead" in just that manner. It did not suggest that he had taken the revelations in the letters more earnestly than he had admitted; nor did it hint at greater scepticism. It betrayed only an open mind and caused her to consider the long experience which this young man, who had enlisted after the Marne and fought four years, must have had with the dead.

"So you heard stories on the train?" Ethel asked.

"Yes; but I wasn't thinking particularly of them. Being with Indians when I was a boy, I was brought up to believe in spirits — *manedos* and *Nibanaba* — everywhere. When I left the Indians, the hardest thing I had to do was to rid myself of superstitions — to try to stop believing ghosts were always about in

everything and likely to be at the bottom of all good and evil. I was thinking, Miss Carew, how strange it is to find the great leaders of my own people taking me back to Azen's *manedos*. Do we keep on straight ahead?"

The source of the hidden road had been doubtful at the edge of a clearing where new trees had failed to grow; and Ethel went ahead slightly to guide the way. The Rock now was constantly in sight; and, glancing again and again at it, Ethel felt it dominating her mood.

Not the Rock alone, of course; what Loutrelle had told her affected her as did the discovery of the marks of the stranger in the roofless shack; and the way her grandfather had spoken to her and talked to himself,—many affairs that morning which had begun so early. She was a little tired and was looking down at the snow only a few yards ahead of her as she went on.

A row of dark dots spotted the snow from right to left,—dots which seemed to redden as she approached them and to grow larger. They appeared about two feet or a yard apart, rather irregularly, but in almost a straight line; and as she reached them, she saw they were drops, drops of blood.

She started and looked about. Except Loutrelle beside her, no man and no animal was anywhere in sight; there were no tracks or scratches on the snow, no marks of any sort but the drops of blood reaching from right to left across the way that Loutrelle and she had been going.

"What is it?" she cried to him, suddenly shaken.

He stooped and scooped up snow containing a drop of the red stain.

"A wounded bird flew over here," he said. "Some one shot a bird; that's all."

"I didn't hear a shot."

"It might have been miles away."

"I didn't see any bird."

"We haven't been looking up. People may be hunting through these woods, we know."

"Yes," she said, trying to get herself together better. She saw him sweep with his ski and brush another spot, avoiding stepping over it as he went on. It probably was accident, she thought; but she followed in his trail rather than cross the line elsewhere.

They entered woods again and soon heard a whip cracking and the voice of a man calling to straining horses.

"Gee-up; hoah, now; gee-up, you Sally!"

"That's Sam Green Sky," Ethel informed; and they came upon a white and roan team,—strong, large mares pulling a wide-runnered wood sled through snow that reached to their hocks.

"B'jou, Miss Ethel!" Sam hailed and waved his arm, while he set about turning his team back into the tracks they had just cleared.

He was a younger man than Redbird, not more than thirty and fat and swarthy, of the type suggesting a mixture of negro blood; he had thick lips which laughed easily, jolly looking eyes, and he was talkative by nature and dressed in the loudest and gaudiest of mackinaw patterns. But if he had other than Indian blood, the mixture was with a strain which left without kink his gleaming, bluish-black hair.

He was chewing tobacco which he spat out, courteously, before speaking to Ethel and acknowledging her introduction to Loutrelle. He did not offer to shake

hands, as had Redbird; but he accepted a cigarette and smoked it immediately when his passengers got on the sled and he drove back through the woods.

"Old man pretty well; pretty mad this morning; old lady well too." Green Sky vouchsafed genial information without urging. "Somebody come to Wheedon's yesterday; and go out to Rock. Old man go down to Wheedon; want to know about it; damn mad." Sam's information began to run around a circle.

Ethel glanced at Loutrelle whom she found gazing at her and waiting for her to ask the question.

"The name of the man — Sam — the man who came to Wheedon's yesterday."

"Oh; stranger. Nobody know him. Never seen here before."

"But he must have given a name, Sam."

"Sure. Mr. Bagley. That's all."

"Bagley, Sam? You said Bagley?"

"Sure thing; why not?"

"Where's he now, Sam?"

"Out there, I guess." He puffed cigarette smoke in the direction of the rock at which he stared for a moment or so longer.

"Hasn't come back. What you know 'bout that?" Sam inquired cheerfully.

Ethel refrained from comment; and Sam, instead of pressing his question, philosophized. "Damn funny business long time 'bout that."

He had turned carefully away from Ethel and toward Loutrelle for his oath.

"Damn funny," Loutrelle agreed quietly.

She caught his glance again, but he ventured no other remark in Sam's hearing until the sled ap-

proached a break through the trees leading to the east which pointed a forking road.

"If that's the way to Wheedon's, I'll be off here, please," he said to Ethel.

She ordered Sam to stop, explaining, "Mr. Loutrelle wants to go to Wheedon's."

But she was quite sure, as she watched him fasten on his skis, that he was going directly to the Rock. She would go to Resurrection Rock, were she in his place; indeed, she wanted now to go to the Rock with him. Bagley — the man named in the letter from London whom nobody had known about until yesterday and who had never been seen here before — was at the Rock; Bagley, to whom Barney Loutrelle was to say he was "Dick" and from whom he was to "take things over." What things?

She gazed at the Rock again and felt the blood running a bit colder within her. She looked back to Loutrelle who had pulled off his glove to offer his hand.

"B'jou, Miss Carew," he said, his eyes meeting hers. "You've been mighty good to me."

"Good-by," she replied unwillingly, taking off her glove also to grasp his hand. "You'll —" she stopped herself. She wanted to caution him, to say that she would like to help him and would aid him, if anything went wrong. But, before Sam, she could not. "You'll come and see me soon, I hope."

"I hope so," he assured. Color had gone from his face, too. Bagley was at the Rock; that made the chain of the circumstances in his letter from Hus complete. He was impatient to be away, she saw; but he would not show it before the Indian. "Thank your grandfather for his invitation to me, please," he added. "And tell him I will call."

He was relaxing his grasp on her fingers to withdraw his hand; but her pressure tightened. He did not understand that he was going into danger, she thought. His friend's letter had only barely suggested it. He expected to encounter strange things, perhaps; but not definite danger. And there was danger to him, she was sure. When she asked herself why she felt it, the reason was her grandfather.

"Call as soon as you can; come to our house tonight," she bade before letting go his hand.

"Thank you; but of course I can't tell. B'jou," he added, looking at Green Sky. "Obliged for the lift."

"B'jou," Sam returned. "Obliged for cigarette."

Loutrelle smiled at Sam's smile and gave him half a dozen more cigarettes. Sam chirruped the horses on. Ethel sat so as to watch Barney Loutrelle as his figure moved off between the trees. He turned about once and waved at her; then, proceeding more swiftly, he soon vanished in a ravine. A few hundred yards further on, she heard the distant echo of a vigorous voice singing the lively tune of an old French song of the time of Napoleon:

*" . . . à Paris, à Paris . . .
Ah, j'y étais mousquetaire!"*

At that point, the St. Florentin road and the path to Wheedon's were just on opposite sides of the rise of ground; and Ethel recognized that it was her new-found friend who was singing to himself as he went on alone to the Rock; and the lilt of the song, reaching her through the still air, stirred the blood to warmth again within her.

" Ah, j'y étais mousquetaire!"

Danger! No fear for him if the danger were honest and open. She glanced ahead and suddenly saw a dark figure, tall and broad but bent a little, standing with back toward her on the top of the ridge,—her grandfather. He, too, seemed to be listening to the singing as he gazed over the ridge toward the path on the other side; he made no move of any sort, but in the very stillness and stealthiness of his standing there — hidden by a tree from view from the other side — she felt menace. Imagined it, perhaps; for her mind was full of many things now.

Her grandfather heard the horses and Sam's voice and turned about. Ethel called up to him and waved; he waved back but for a moment did not reply. That is, he did not reply aloud. He remained standing; and Ethel knew that he was talking to himself, trying over what first he would say to her before he came down the hill and said it.

"Well, my dear, you're here, are you? Where's your friend from the train? That he, singing, eh? Won't come to my house. Did you ask him?"

"Yes, grandfather. But he said to thank you; he'd call later. He wanted to go first to the Rock."

"So he'll call later, eh? Now who is he? You can tell me that, I see. What's brought him here to the Rock? I'll know all about that fellow."

Ethel gazed into her grandfather's eyes,—little, blood-shot but keen under his low, bushy, white brows. She said nothing aloud as she closed her lips; but to herself, defiance spoke.

"Not from me," the unuttered words determined. "Never from me."

CHAPTER IV

THE HOUSEHOLD OF ST. FLORENTIN

WHEN she was obliged to reply, she only repeated the fact of her meeting with Barney Loutrelle as she had related it over the telephone. Of course it did not satisfy her grandfather; and he stood in the snow studying her while, in answer to his demands, she told him further circumstances of her first words with the stranger.

"I heard him asking about St. Florentin," she said. "No one knew where it was. I told him."

"All right; all right; go on."

"So he got off at Quesnel; I did, too. Asa was there, and we borrowed his skis for Mr. Loutrelle and came to Wheedon's road together."

"All right; all right," her grandfather jerked again curtly. He kicked his feet out of his snowshoes and sat down on the side of the sled, hooking the shoes up with his toes and laying them on the sled floor. "Drive on, Sam."

The Indian, who had frankly turned about in his seat to glean information about the stranger who had gone to Wheedon's, delayed a minute more while he lit a fresh cigarette from the stub of the old one. His beady, black eyes, half closed by the fat of his cheeks as he drew at his cigarette, squinted at Lucas. Sam had become aware, quite as well as had Lucas, that Ethel was concealing interesting details; and he ob-

served now that the old man had given up questioning her because of his presence. Accordingly Sam now volunteered:

"I tell 'em 'bout Bagley come. They want to know."

He made the statement casually and quite without taking sides in the opposition which had sprung up between the girl and the old man. Sam was concerned simply in developing more facts.

"Loutrelle asked about Bagley?" Lucas challenged Ethel.

"I did," Ethel returned. "When Sam said some one had come to the Rock, I asked who."

Lucas glanced at Sam who was ready for more conversation; but immediately the old man remembered himself and looked down the road. "Drive on, Sam," he commanded again. He would not question an Indian about affairs of his granddaughter.

Sam started the horses and gazed away to the distant Rock. "Damn funny business," he repeated his comment cheerfully; and except for the breathing of the mares, the scrape and slap of harness straps and the creak of the wood runners in the snow, there was silence. Over the hillock, the sound of singing had died away.

Ethel sat silent beside her grandfather who soon offered talk about uncontentious family matters: how his son Lucas was feeling this winter and what he said about bolshevism.

"Feed the fools? Feed the fools?" the old man mocked, when Ethel related what her uncle thought. "Machine-gun them, I say. What's the matter with Lucas and his rotten soft generation? That boy Bennet back from Camp Taylor yet?"

"Yes, grandfather," Ethel said.

"Hope the army put some stiff backbone into him. We're going to need backbone, I see. Where is Ben-net? In your uncle's office again?"

Ethel related details of her cousin's return to business in the Chicago office and items about Aunt Myra's activities in relief organizations, while her grandfather interjected curt criticisms or grunts of approval. His mind always had been keenly alert; he still had excellent eyes, and since his withdrawal to St. Florentin, he had become an indefatigable reader, subscribing not only to all local newspapers and to one daily from Chicago but to more than a score of magazines ranging from the *Wall Street Journal* and the *Chicago Economist*, of which he partly approved, to the *New Republic* and the *Nation* which infuriated him so that he read them through usually upon the hour they arrived; and thereafter, for a day or two, he would compose biting and unanswerable rejoinders to their lunacies which he would repeat to his wife or any guest in the house and which he might even write out. But he never mailed them.

He was rehearsing to Ethel his latest retort for the editor of the *New Republic* when the sled reached the ruins of the old village,—the windowless, unroofed shacks, the rifted store building and the church with the gray, wind-splintered cross. The emptiness of the place affected Ethel in spite of her many former visits; she had never learned to pass through without glancing at the windows for a face or looking for doors to open and listening for a sound. But her grandfather did not turn his head or pause in his recital of his sarcastic paragraphs. Sam Green Sky also sat motionless, smoking and looking toward the great, ram-

bling "cottage" which was looming on the top of the next slope. Lucas had had his home painted a brownish-red last summer, with a trim done in a lighter shade of brown which brought out the bold, ungraceful lines of the porch running across the whole front of the house and extending about halfway back on both sides.

The house faced south toward the lake, but it had doors on all sides. An even, uncompromising row of windows — seven to the south, six to the west — looked out under the porch roof; above the porch, the second-floor windows exactly matched the lower rows; and there you could see more plainly that the center three of the front windows were set in a "bow." The walls were clapboard; the roof was shingle and with gutters and rainspout in good repair to catch and pipe rain water to a cistern. Fifty yards away, behind the house, was a barn, similarly clapboarded and painted to match the house; and in the earlier days of Ethel's visits there had been a delightful old clapboard windmill. But several years ago it had been torn down, and Lucas had substituted the neat, low, flat-roofed structure which now stood over the deep-driven well and sheltered the gasoline engine which pumped water to the house and generated electricity for light and power.

Every one was well at the house, and everything was going well there, Lucas had assured in reply to Ethel's questions. The persons whom he grouped under "every one" were his wife and "Miss Platt" and "Miss Platt's husband." Long ago, when Lucas still had his office upon Dearborn Street in Chicago, Miss Platt had been his private secretary; she had been about thirty, then,— a large-boned, firmly built, phlegmatic woman with dull, hazel eyes and lusterless,

sand-colored hair. She was one of those women so lacking in feminine charm as to be set down, thoughtlessly, as almost sexless, but whom undisclosed fires of passion consume and who put up with almost anything to be married.

She had a clear head and an orderly disposition, together with a capacity for secretiveness which had made her worth thirty-five hundred a year to Lucas Cullen in those old days when demagogues were "investigating" his affairs. This salary, with its prospects of increase as the attacks upon Lucas became more savage, was sufficient to enable her to attract a lazy, good-looking youth named Merrill Kincheloe, seven years younger than herself. She married him and thereafter supported him, to her employer's exceeding disgust. Lucas never let her marriage change her name to him and, when he had been obliged to refer to Kincheloe, it had been always as "Miss Platt's husband." She had left the Cullen employ when Lucas "retired"; but a few years ago he had sent for her; and with her came her husband, for some of the time, at least. He spoke of himself as a "road salesman" to explain his long absences, and Miss Platt pretended that, when he went away, it was on business.

By the statement that everything was going well, Lucas meant that he had capable house servants,—two in number just now, a half-blood Indian woman named Mrs. Singlewolf and her daughter Naomi who wintered at St. Florentin after the summer boarding-houses in Petoskey closed. All but Miss Platt's husband were at the door as the sled drew up before the porch; and Ethel felt a rush of love as she saw her grandmother. She was a little woman, thin and shrunken now but erect, with spirit unbroken by her

many years; far more than her husband, she made Ethel think of life in the timberlands when her husband and she were young. He spoke often of those old days and she seldom; but his talk was of the millions of feet of lumber which he had made a tract of land furnish to the saws, while her few remembrances were of homely happenings like weddings and births and deaths of the people of the old forest. Ethel had not seen her grandmother since her father had died; and she had not realized till now that her grandmother was dearer to her than any one living. So she cried a little as she kissed her soft, wrinkled cheek. "There; there, Debsie; Debsie," the old lady patted and comforted her, calling the granddaughter by the daughter's name; and her own old eyes were wet.

Ethel shook hands with Miss Platt and said a few words to the Indians. Sam bore firewood through the hall and up the stairs, and she followed to the room on the second floor which always had been hers,—a large, pleasant room, almost square, with windows on the south and on the west. It was heated by a big iron register in the center of the floor which brought hot air from the wood furnace in the basement; but the room also possessed a Franklin stove in which maple logs were burning hotly.

Sam put down his load and officiously adjusted the drafts of the stove, delaying to speak to Ethel alone.

"Look here; I talk too much?"

"Oh, no," Ethel denied.

"Don't want to make you no trouble," Sam apologized handsomely, and departed. Then Ethel's grandmother came in, carrying a tray with hot cocoa and a dish of rice and a plate of rolls and fruit preserve. Ethel hugged her again and thanked her; and the old

lady patted Ethel's hand, said the jam was made from their own raspberries and departed. Ethel had tried not to betray that she wanted to be alone; but her grandmother always understood such things; and Ethel knew she was not offended.

Now that the door was closed, Ethel deserted her tray and went to the window overlooking the lake. Resurrection Rock, except that it was closer, had altered in no aspect from the hour before; not enough time had passed to permit Barney Loutrelle to reach it, so Ethel scanned the ice-sheet and the snow for sign of a moving figure. She made out a dark dot two miles or more away; and dragging her table nearer the window, she watched the dot while she ate.

Slowly it approached the Rock; and Ethel thought of the telescope which her grandfather used in the open season to identify ships passing in the channel for the Straits; it usually hung in a case in a closet off the hall; going to the closet, she found the case in place but the telescope was gone. Returning to her window, she glanced toward the projecting "bow" of three windows in front of her grandfather's room and through the side window, she saw the end of the telescope tube and her grandfather's hand holding it to point toward the speck approaching the Rock. She could not see her grandfather's face, just the end of the telescope and his right hand and forearm steadily supporting the tube, so steadily that his tension amazed her.

She looked quickly to the lake; but she could not see the speck of the man moving out there, as he had vanished into the shadow on the north side of the Rock. She waited for him to climb to the top, straining her eyes to see him on the path by which he must approach

the house; but she could discern nothing but the bulk of the Rock with the snow-covered house merged into it. She glanced at her grandfather's window to find his hand still holding the telescope pointed; through it, he was seeing — what? And why should he care so much? What influence supplied steadiness to his hand to hold the glass motionless so long?

He suddenly became conscious that she observed him; or perhaps he had seen all he wished; for his hand drew back, and the glass was gone.

Ethel shivered and retreated from her window to the stove where she finished her cocoa which had become cold. It was remarkable that whereas early in the morning her business affairs had so absorbed her that she could not sleep, now the concerns of a stranger had made her forgetful of her own. She partly undressed and bathed her face and arms; after again dressing, she took from her overcoat pocket a large envelope filled with the business papers over which she had been puzzling on the train. Separating a few sheets of summaries, she folded them in her hand and went downstairs to the big, cluttered room at the southwest corner of the house which her grandfather called his office. The door was open, and a fire was glowing, half burnt out, upon the wide hearth within; but no one was there when Ethel entered. She always had liked this big room which really was less an office than a museum of trophies from her grandfather's long life; but now she was conscious of something more than her old curiosity as she moved about before the articles on display,—a framed woodcut of Lincoln printed in 1860 by the little Ohio newspaper for which Lucas Cullen had worked when a boy; souvenirs which he had picked up in Virginia — he had

been only sixteen when he ran away and joined the army of the Potomac; his discharge papers; pictures of men, prominent and powerful in their days of the '70s in Ohio, Indiana, Michigan, Wisconsin and Illinois, but now forgotten; here was the framed menu of a dinner to him at the old Tremont House in Chicago; faded and drooping cockades from the Blaine convention and the Harrison campaign; an inscription from Robert Ingersoll and one from Lyman Trumbull.

The furniture of the room also was composed of trophies: the scarred and shabby desk pitted with black holes where great men, in arguing with Lucas, had laid their lighted cigars; the old, hair-cloth lounge; the rows of brittle-backed books — faded brown and yellowish-green and blue — contending projects and issues of two generations ago. Only in the corner where Miss Platt had her desk and typewriter table was a patch of modern office furnishings with vertical filing cases and card index boxes.

A pile of newly typed sheets upon Miss Platt's desk indicated to Ethel that her grandfather had been unusually busy that morning; but the prominent letter-head of a Methodist missionary society suggested that his activities might have been concerned with the religious work which recently had begun to claim much of his time. She turned away to the fire, thinking of her grandfather dictating his letters to the missionaries whom he supported in Africa and India and Malaysia; then came the image of him as she had seen him standing on the hill looking at Barney Loutrelle; and she recalled his hand, so remarkably steady and intent, holding the glass toward the Rock.

"Ethel!" she heard his voice calling her. He had come downstairs and was looking for her in the sitting

room. She hurried to the door as she replied. "Oh in there," he returned. "All right; stay there." And, as she retreated, he came into the room and closed the door behind him. "Forgot you came on business," he said, looking at the papers which she held. "Business," he repeated to himself; then, at her, "All right; let me hear it."

He sank down into the chair before his desk which was a swivel chair that tipped back when he threw his weight into it. In order to keep balanced, he hunched slightly forward and with the toe of his shoe he pulled out the desk drawer nearest to the floor and rested his leg upon it. There are attitudes taken by very old persons which may suddenly shear years from them in spite of wrinkled skin and whiteness of hair and dullness of eye; for when an old man forgets for the moment that he is aged, a throwback in his mind causes him to follow a physical habit discarded decades earlier. Lucas Cullen was following such a habit now, resting his foot upon the drawer, hunching his big shoulders toward his granddaughter and with one of his large, bony hands half clenched upon his desk. His other hand went to his forehead, and he combed his hair with his fingers; he had as much hair as ever he had had in the days when his thick, intractable mat was his mark of surest identification in newspaper cartoons.

Ethel felt that she was seeing him almost as he must have been in the vigor of his great deeds of the time of the Tremont House dinner and the cockades on the wall. He took his hand from his hair and, without glancing away from her, he fumbled in a pigeonhole, found a big cigar and put it between his lips, chewing it and leaving it unlighted. Vacancy had come to his

eyes; and she knew, though he stared at her, his thought had gone from the "business" which brought her and had run into distant memories of events underlying his relation to her father's affairs. "Let me hear it," he commanded once more, coming back to himself.

"I've come for money, grandfather," she confessed at once. "A good deal of money, some of which I need immediately." She knew it was better to confess that unpleasant fact at once rather than to start with reasons and have him break in upon her, as she had heard him interrupt other pleaders, with his demand, "Well; well; what does all this talk lead to? Money, I suppose."

He said part of that, anyway. "I supposed it was money. Well, how much?"

"I've the total here; the dates mean the time when I ought to have the different amounts," she explained, trembling in spite of herself when she took the top sheet from the papers folded in her hand and spread it before him. She turned and went to the fire so as not to see him when he began to scrutinize it.

"All right; all right," his voice, deep and rasping, brought her around to him again. He liked to employ, in ejaculations, words which bore a meaning opposite to the tone in which he spoke. "Now why do you need this small change which you've marked 'immediate'? Why won't to-morrow do for a dollar or so of that?"

Ethel faced him, biting her lips before she trusted herself to reply; she knew that he did not mean to-morrow literally and that this was his favorite way of speaking when he wished to torment one whom he held at a disadvantage; yet she found herself saying,

"To-morrow will do, grandfather; or indeed, next

week will do wonderfully, if I can be sure of that first amount. I've written the names of the places where I want to put the money after each item; you have them, you see."

"They mean nothing whatever to me; your father refrained from taking me into his affairs."

She knew that this latter statement was true; but the other was not. She recently had learned that her grandfather had informed himself fully about her father's business; nevertheless she recognized that, for purposes of his own, he meant to force her to explain as if he were completely ignorant.

"Those are the names of irrigation and development companies and water-power plants in Montana and Wyoming, mostly, with one in Idaho. Their names show their location, grandfather; the first five are almost ready for operation; the others are not. I want the money marked 'immediate' to complete the first five and get them running. If I do not do that, the leases — or the purchase contracts — will lapse."

"That's too bad. Who made the leases and contracts?"

"My father."

"When?"

"Some of them many years ago; others more recently. The dates of the leases are here." She furnished him with another sheet of figures.

He only grunted as he glanced over it and stopped chewing his cigar. He found a match in his vest pocket and, scratching it under his desk, he lighted his cigar now and, leaned back, puffing, as he laid down the papers. "All right; what happens if they lapse?"

"Father's interest — my interest now," Ethel said

quietly, "of course is lost. I suppose I'm thinking a good deal about that; I know I'm thinking a lot about having the things which father worked at so hard, succeed; but that's not most important. It's to see that father's friends and our neighbors out west — and neighbors and friends include a whole lot of all sorts of people in Wyoming and Montana — to see that they get their money back. Some of them put all they had into these companies, they trusted father so. They thought he was going to live and see everything through."

"Well, why didn't he?"

"He didn't foresee the war, grandfather."

"So when it came, he considered it excused him of all responsibilities, eh? He packed up and off without making any provision for these obligations," the old man picked up the papers to strike them against his desk, "or for his friends who trusted everything to him?"

"No," Ethel denied; and of this she knew her grandfather was completely aware. "He made an arrangement."

"All right; who with?"

"With cousin Oliver, grandfather."

The old man jerked forward, roused to anger at mention of the name. "Damn weakling," he muttered.

"What arrangement did he enter into?"

Ethel felt hot blood pricking in her face; she had prepared herself for the taunts against her father who in his life had been strong, but she had not thought of jibes against this cousin who had been his friend.

"Cousin Oliver felt himself physically a — weakling," she said, utilizing her grandfather's word after an instant's hesitation. "That was why he came to

father. Cousin Oliver tried to get into service everywhere, but no one would take him; he knew father wanted to go, so he agreed to see everything through for father while he'd be away and, if father was killed, cousin Oliver promised to complete all this work."

"All right; let me see the agreement."

"I haven't it."

"A copy will do."

"It never was written; it was just verbal; that was all father cared about from cousin Oliver — that he said it and that cousin Agnes knew about it, too. You see he never could imagine that cousin Oliver and cousin Agnes, and he, himself, would all die. It seemed safe. Besides, it wasn't the sort of promise you could write up in an agreement."

"No, I suppose not. But now that Oliver and his wife both are dead, where are you?"

The blood flashed again, burning, into Ethel's face.

"Why I'm here, grandfather, asking the money from you."

"I'll not give it to you on that showing."

"I ask you to lend, not to give."

"Why don't you go to a bank, then?"

"I've been to banks; they say they can't lend upon uncompleted projects like mine."

"You've been to your uncles?"

"I saw uncle Lucas in Chicago."

"What did he say?"

"He refused me."

"So you came to work upon my natural affections for you?"

"Yes," Ethel said. "Yes; I suppose you may say I've done that."

Her grandfather slowly drew his leg back from the

drawer; suddenly he kicked the drawer shut and with his hands upon the desk, he pushed himself up to his feet. He was still a towering man in spite of the slight stoop which took more than an inch from the stature which had distinguished the days of his great vigor; he had never taken on flesh, and now his muscles were so firm that in limb he might have been twenty years younger than he was; and his big hand was steady as he raised it and brandished it at his granddaughter.

"Your father believed he was so smart — so smart," he gloated over her; and she knew, even before he reached the next words, that he had gone far back of immediate matters to the causes of antagonism long ago. "He carried off my daughter and thought he could win against me! He sided with John — John," he repeated the name of his brother violently. "Well, it did look like good business then. John seemed to have stronger hold on the property than I had. But your father forgot about longevity. John was under the sod before he was seventy. Your father forgot about my sons, too. John had Oliver — damn weakling; so he's under the sod, too; his wife's below the waves; and everything they had's in court. But it's coming to me! It's got to come to me!" he repeated, snapping off each word short and flailing with his arm for emphasis. "And you got to come to me if you want anything; everything, everybody's got to come to me! For I'm alive and they're all dead! To live — just to keep breath in you, that's something. John didn't think of that. Couldn't see why I'd care about living — up here. But I'm living; he's under the sod. No doctors put blood-pressure machines on me. I've got everything now; or I'm going to get it — everything they had and everything they thought they

took away from me, John and Oliver — damn weaklings — and that damn wife of Oliver's who couldn't even die decently but had to be drowned so as to throw everything into court. But it'll come to me, I tell you; and I'll be alive to get it!"

He jerked about and strode across the room, stumbling over the edge of the heavy rug; he caught himself, with a violent ejaculation, and flung back the rug with his foot. Ethel stayed by the fire, watching him. She saw that his outburst had gone further than he meant it to, that he had betrayed more to her than he had intended; and she stood, breathing hard in the first throes of examination of him.

She was beginning to realize that up to this day her questions about her grandfather and her father's relations with him and with the others of the family had been merely curious. What was, was; and she had accepted it without embarking upon any real effort for understanding. She had said to herself, as she had repeated often to others, that her grandfather "liked to live" at St. Florentin. She had never thought about him coming here in order to be sure to live and to outlive his brother and his brother's son. There was something about that which shot a strange, unwelcome sensation through her,— her grandfather stalking through the woods gloating that he was living while his brother, down in the city, was dying, and his brother's son a "weakling" and also likely to die so that everything should come to him. And now that she was ceasing to accept what was, she knew that the reason just betrayed was not sufficient to account for St. Florentin; some cause which cut far deeper had been operating and was beginning to affect her.

She watched him as he went to a window and, catching at the crossrail, stood staring out while he recovered himself. For a few moments, he seemed not to be seeing but simply to be staring. Then he jerked straight, and Ethel knew that he had begun to see and that what he saw was the Rock, gaunt and glistening in the last rays of the declining sun.

Her grandfather slowly turned about, his lips moving in words to himself; then he advanced toward her and said aloud:

"You want about two hundred thousand dollars immediately?"

He had dropped both the boasting of the moment before and the taunting tone of his first question. Ethel did not understand this quiet statement.

"One hundred and eighty-five thousand is the total I put down as necessary now, grandfather," she said.

"Practically two hundred thousand; call it that," he corrected generously. "Well — well, it may be managed. It may be managed." He was attempting to reproduce, now, the indulgent manner he used to take with her long ago when she was a little girl and came to him for dimes and quarters and half dollars for children's trinkets. "Of course, if we toss that in," he continued, "we must be prepared to toss more after it. Everything must be seen through. And that will run into money — into something like money." He had halted over his desk and had picked up the paper of her totals again and was looking at them.

"But the properties, if developed, will be worth more," Ethel said.

"Maybe. Maybe. At least you think so. Well; well, my dear, I'll think it over carefully." He folded the papers and put out his hand for the others which

she had retained; she gave them to him with a few words of explanation, and he folded them with the first and put them in his pocket. His manner now seemed to mean that he had postponed consideration which he was inclined to make favorable. He patted Ethel's arm fondly.

"Now, my dear, tell me about that fellow Loutrelle who came over with you and went to Wheedon's."

She drew back a little from him. Then it was his sight of the Rock within the minute before, had changed him!

"Why, grandfather," she said, "I've told you a good deal about him; I just met him on the train this morning."

He seized her as the passion which he had with difficulty put down rose to mastery of him again.

"That's a lie — a lie!" he charged. "You're friends; you know all about him. You're — friends!"

She struggled to break the hold of his hand upon her shoulder, the blood hot within her. "I don't lie!" she defied him. "I do know more about him than I told you; but what I said was true. I told you he was going to the Rock. We both — both of us saw him go there, I think."

She witnessed no effect upon him from that. "You're friends — friends!" he accused her. "Miss Platt heard Sam telling Naomi that a friend of yours came with you. Now are you going to tell me about him?"

"No."

"What?"

"No!"

He bent over her. "All right; all right!" he said at last, pulling her papers from his pocket and thrust-

ing them at her. He went past her to Miss Platt's desk, where he put his hand to a push button. Ethel could hear a bell ringing in some other part of the house and, knowing that she was dismissed, she went out, meeting Miss Platt in the hall.

"Beautiful afternoon," Miss Platt said agreeably.

"Beautiful," Ethel acquiesced and, avoiding the lighted sitting room where her grandmother might be waiting, she returned to her bedroom.

CHAPTER V

THE HUNT IN THE NIGHT

IT was fast becoming dark, as the swift, midwinter evening closed down. With the night came wind; and upon the wind returned the cold, not so intense as that of the early morning at Escanaba; nor was the wind as strong as then. The sky stayed clear, showing pale stars through the twilight into which the gaunt outline of the Rock withdrew to dimmer and dimmer distances until Ethel at her window could see it no more. And then, soon after it had vanished, suddenly a bright dot glowed through the darkness,— a light upon Resurrection Rock, a light yellow with distance illumining a window, Ethel thought. It went out as suddenly as it appeared; then it glowed again and once more went dark. But this time it was not snuffed out suddenly but sank so slowly that for a few moments Ethel could not be certain whether or not it was gone. One could do that by slowly turning down a lamp, Ethel considered, or by slowly carrying a lamp away from a window and out of the room. She watched steadily for some time longer; but no light appeared again.

Yet what she had seen made her sure that her friend of the morning was there. Who was with him and what was happening; or what might he be learning, she wondered. What, of such momentous interest to her grandfather?

Her friend out there. Sam had spoken of him as her friend; and he was her friend. It amazed her, when she realized how very close she had come to that young man who had gone alone to the Rock, to count how few hours they had been together. And how clearly her mind gave her vision of him: now as he was beside her on his skis, looking down at her; now as he stood with his hands outstretched before the fire in the cabin, having forgotten her for the instant and dreaming; now as he went away alone down the road to Wheedon's, his voice coming back to her:

"Ah, j'y étais mousquetaire!"

And her grandfather had thought she would sell him out, him who had been the little white boy Barney with the Indians and who had built up his pride; him to whom her father would speak. It had been all very well out in the noon sunshine to say that, since her father had been killed in June, it could not have been he who would have spoken to Barney Loutrelle in London in November; but now it was very dark, with only the shimmer of stars outside above the black boughs of the trees and, within Ethel's room, the only light was coming from the door of the wood stove which stood open a little and let a ruby flicker of flame dance silent shadows on the wall.

How low she would have sunk if — when she was being bribed — she had told about him. He had asked of her no pledge of secrecy; never once had he even said he was speaking in confidence. He had been too certain that she could not repeat to others such matters as he related; besides, if she had sold him out, she somehow would have sold out herself as well. And now,

as she sat up in the dark before those dancing shadows on the wall, an idea seized her. If he were her father who would have spoken to Barney Loutrelle, she could not yet guess what her father would have said; but she felt sure that his purpose was to send this new friend here to help her.

She heard a soft tap, tap, tap at her door; and she went over and opened it to find no one in the darkened hall. This gave her a start till she felt something warm and soft moving at her feet,— the collies, Lad and Lass, who had been out with Kincheloe when she arrived. She stooped, patting the sleek bodies which rubbed affectionately against her legs; and the return of the dogs, wet from the snow melting in their long hair, turned Ethel's thought to Miss Platt's husband.

He had always affected the manners of a gallant and always before had made it a particular point to be on hand to greet Ethel when she arrived at St. Florentin. She had been too excited to attribute any significance to his absence this time; but now the fact stirred disquiet. She did not exactly define it to herself; but so far as she considered, it was something like this. Her grandfather had been alarmed by an occurrence this day which was connected with the arrival of Barney Loutrelle and his going to Resurrection Rock; in some way that seemed to threaten her grandfather so that he was likely to make a move against Barney Loutrelle. As her grandfather was here in the house, Ethel had thought of that move as only in preparation; she had forgotten about Kincheloe who had not been in the house but — rather unexpectedly — had been outdoors.

As he had taken the dogs with him, he probably had been on the lake, for the dogs would not have been able

to run except on the ice where the wind had cleared the snow. Now what had kept Miss Platt's lazy, comfort-loving husband out so late this evening in the dark and cold?

Ethel went downstairs to find Merrill Kincheloe; and she discovered him sooner than she expected. For the stairways at St. Florentin were carpeted and, as she happened to descend without starting any squeaks in the wood, she came down far enough to glance along the lower hall before Miss Platt's husband was aware that any one was about. She surprised him under the hall light, pressed close to the panels of the "office" door and listening.

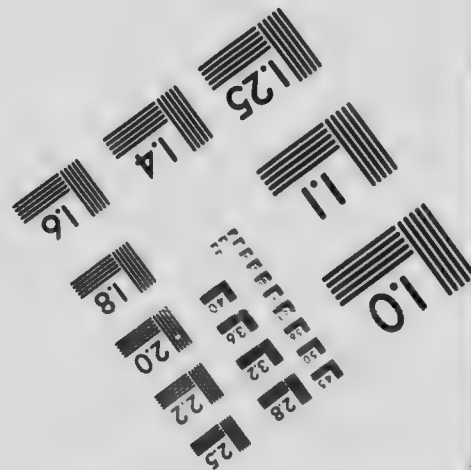
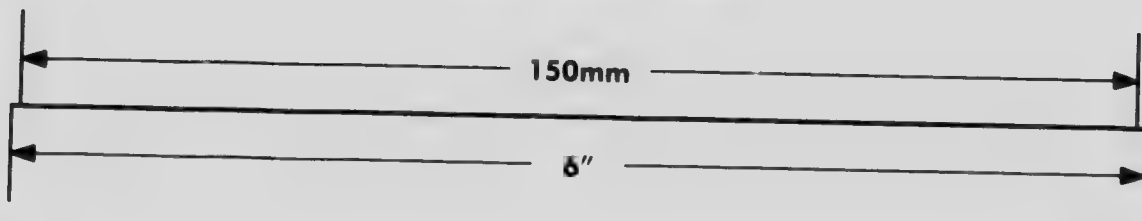
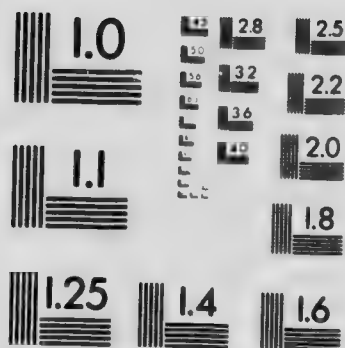
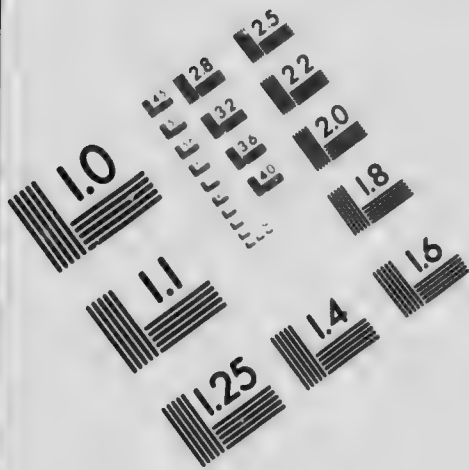
He jumped when he saw her, but the next instant he made a really remarkable effort to carry off the situation, greeting Ethel in much the same manner as usual and then asking, almost casually: "Do you know, is Mrs. Kincheloe in there? I wanted to see her but not to interrupt if they were working."

"She's there," Ethel replied superfluously as the vibration of her grandfather's voice was clearly discernible where they were standing. Ethel studied Miss Platt's husband more seriously than she ever had before while he chatted with her in the sitting room, offering his usual, cleverish small talk about general happenings,—the last news of the peace conference, Mrs. Wilson, the prohibition amendment.

Miss Platt's husband was getting along close to forty, and his idleness and vacuity were making ineffaceable marks upon him. His brown hair showed not a filament of gray; and he had kept his skin young,—by cold cream like a woman, Ethel previously had thought. But little pouches puffed under his eyes when he smiled, and his eyes, themselves, were clouded. One



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formed the impression, even now when he was making no physical effort, that his wind was bad; and thick veins in his hands were other traces which betrayed unpleasantly that this man no longer was the youth that his manner liked to assume.

Whenever Ethel had thought about him before, she had considered him contented as long as he obtained enough from his wife to buy himself good — too good and too youthful — clothes and to indulge in his occasional “business trips”, drinking and gambling a little perhaps or “flirting” with younger girls. Ethel did not permit herself to dwell concretely upon men’s dissipations. But now she knew that Miss Platt’s husband either never was just such a man as that or else recently he had developed more ambitious appetites.

He began talking about himself to her, about a syndicate to develop export trade into which he expected to “put a little money.” Miss Platt’s husband, no longer satisfied with his allowance from his wife, was thinking money — more money — immediately. Ethel wondered where he expected to get it; and, wondering, she thought about his errand this afternoon, which he had not yet mentioned to her, and his listening at her grandfather’s door.

She recognized vaguely that at one time — and perhaps even at this time — Miss Platt could have made money by telling muckrakers about the Cullen private affairs. But Miss Platt did not; she always had been trustworthy. One could not think of her husband as trustworthy. Ethel never imagined that Kincheloe “knew” what Miss Platt must know; and the fact that Ethel had caught him listening at a door to overhear what her grandfather was dictating to Miss Platt proved that she did not confide in her husband. Why?

Because he might use his knowledge to betray things for money? Betray what things?

Thus, while Kincheloe was talking to her, she was thinking about her grandfather. She heard him come into the hall several times and turn the telephone bell handle, in vain attempt to call the cabin; for the hour was long past when Asa Redbird should have returned from the railroad. Ethel had learned that part of Asa's errand to Quesnel was to fetch a telegram which her grandfather expected from her uncle Lucas in Chicago. It had not arrived in the morning; and it proved to have been so delayed that every one was at supper when Asa at last returned with a brief message which — like all Cullen business telegrams that had to pass the little country offices — was in a business code.

Lucas at once left the table and, with Miss Platt, went into his office to decipher the brief communication from his son. When he returned to the table, it was so plain that he had exciting news that his wife could not repress her question:

"Something has happened in Chicago, Lucas?"

"Nothing," he denied, and he gulped half a cup of tea, hot. "Nothing at all," he repeated so emphatically that his wife said no more. Ethel offered no comment; she watched Kincheloe as Miss Platt returned to her seat.

He was trying to catch his wife's glance; but Miss Platt avoided looking at him.

"Asa saw several foxes about," she said casually to Ethel; "I suppose they're after our chickens; the foxes are unusually numerous and bold this year, it seems."

"So Naomi told me," Ethel replied. Her grandfather was taking another cup of tea, and she was

watching his hand reach for the sugar bowl, miss it and reach again. He was drinking when suddenly he dropped his cup and jerked up and away from the table; Kincheloe and Ethel herself started also as the report of a rifle rang, sharp and clear, outside the house. The gun fired again.

Miss Platt and Ethel's grandmother alike had revealed no alarm.

"Asa said he would get his gun," Miss Platt volunteered quietly, "and come back for the foxes."

"Of course," her husband said, dropping back into his seat.

Lucas remained at the table only a moment before he proceeded to the front room where, in recent years, family prayer was said each evening after supper. His wife followed him, but Ethel went to her own room and from the darkened window looked out to the Rock to see a light glowing there again. This quieted her; yet she went down to the kitchen to ascertain from Mrs. Singlewolf that Asa actually had returned and shot at a fox before she rejoined her grandparents and Miss Platt in the sitting room. Miss Platt's husband had gone out, not taking the dogs this time.

"Asa wounded a fox," Miss Platt explained. "Mr. Kincheloe is helping Asa track him."

Ethel sat down while her grandmother started the victrola to playing "Brighten The Corner Where You Are." Then Lucas read a chapter from the Bible — the eighth of 1st Kings which Ethel decided must be the longest in either testament; after that was prayer; and while she knelt, listening to her grandfather's voice go on and on, an amazing panic possessed her. She was feeling that the long, deliberate reading and now the endless supplication was for a purpose other than

devotion, and that purpose was to keep her kneeling in that stuffy room with her face to the back of a chair. She fought this feeling, but it gained new impulse, and suddenly she arose and slipped into the hall where she found her coat and cap and skis. She drew breath, when she opened the outer door, as though she had been stifling; and she went out upon the snow in the direction of the lake.

She heard her grandfather's voice shouting after her; but she did not heed it, and he did not pursue her. It was after eight o'clock and very cold, with a constant wind blowing off the ice. The moon would not rise for several hours, but the stars were shining with mid-winter splendour through the pure air, and the snow strengthened their light so that Ethel could see near objects well enough; but the Rock lay lost in obscurity. She gazed frequently for the reappearance of the light which she had seen the hour earlier; so clear was the night that, when she reached the shore, she could see the horizon stars down almost to the level of the ice-sheet. She fancied, indeed, that she could make out the bulk of the Rock eclipsing one of these stars as she moved. Certainly there was no light now upon the Rock; and though she remembered that it had appeared and vanished twice before, its absence filled her with dread.

Yet it might only mean that Barney Loutrelle had left the house on the Rock and was coming to St. Florentin and to her, as she had asked him. No; now the light reappeared and glowed steadily.

She had reached the shore, and she slowed her step. The cold wind blowing in her face and the ice stretching before her, the galaxy of the heavens overhead stilled the panic which had seized her when kneeling

in the close, overheated room where her grandfather prayed. Her new friend of this day was at the Rock where his light was burning steadily. Perhaps Miss Platt's husband had gone out there curiously; but nothing else was happening. If she went on to the Rock - and there was no use in going further, without going all the way - and saw Barney Loutrelle there, what would she say to him?

She turned back to St. Florentin and soon heard a shout which she recognized to be Sam Green Sky's voice. When she replied, Sam hastened up, reporting friendlily:

"Old man send me after you, awful mad; old man tell you to come right home and stay there."

Ethel found her grandfather to be "awful mad" indeed; he met her at the door and ordered her to go to her room and to bed and stay there. What did she mean by going out in the dark to see a stranger whom she had met on the train? She was his granddaughter and at his own house, and he would be obeyed.

She obeyed him by going to her room; but she did not undress for bed. The light upon the Rock was still glowing; and she left her window shade up while she lay on her bed watching it. She heard her grandfather and her grandmother come upstairs, and she heard Miss Platt proceed to the rooms on the second floor and at the further end of the house, which she shared with her husband. Ethel was sure also that Mrs. Singlewolf and Naomi had retired; but Kincheloe was not in the house.

He had been away when she had returned, and he had not come in since. At eleven o'clock Ethel rebuilt the fire in her stove and sat in a chair by her window. The light on the Rock continued to burn;

but its glow was ceasing to reassure her. From the room on the other side of the wall at her left she could hear sounds which told her that her grandfather was still restless; she heard him open his door and go out into the hall and come to her door and stand there. He was listening, she knew; but as her light was out and she sat quiet, he probably supposed her to be in bed and asleep. At any rate, after waiting a minute or two, he moved away and went downstairs.

She had taken off her boots before lying down and was wearing slippers; but she discarded even these and, in her stocking feet, moved noiselessly across to her door which she opened carefully. She crept halfway down the stairs and there waited for her grandfather, whom she could hear walking about, to come into her view. Something clicked; she recognized that he was loading a repeating rifle; and a few moments later his great figure came dimly into view when he halted before a window. She could see that he was holding his rifle ready but lowered; and her muscles went taut all through her. If he raised his rifle to fire, she would rush down upon him. But he did not; he only moved from one window to another, looking out; and then he came toward the stairs.

She regained her room without alarming him; and he went back to his room. On the Rock, the light had gone out. And being unable now to see anything but the stars and the snow and bare branches of the trees swaying slightly in the wind, Ethel opened her window to listen better. But no sound came to her except the brush of the breeze and, after some time, a call which she recognized as that of a snow owl. Then, close to midnight, she made out a man's figure moving under the trees; dogs floundered beside him — Lad and Lass

undoubtedly. So she knew the man must be Kincheloe, returning.

He carried the gun which he had taken to aid Asa in killing the fox; and as he neared the house, Ethel heard her grandfather go downstairs, heard the door open: then — she again was at the head of the stairs — whispers. They went together to the "office" and locked themselves in. For a minute Ethel stood in the cold hall, held by numbing dread; just as she started to descend the stairs, she heard the office door open and her grandfather say distinctly, "All right; all right!"

They had lit the office lamp, and the beam of light from the door showed Ethel her grandfather standing while Kincheloe went past him toward the kitchen where he turned on the water. Ethel halted and stood watching her grandfather who remained back to her in the light from the door. She heard Kincheloe leave the kitchen and ascend by way of the back stairs.

Her grandfather slowly turned about, and the light from the office shone upon his face, inclined downward a little, strained and with muscles at the jaw drawn tight. She had only a glimpse before he stepped into the room and turned out the light; but, having seen, she gripped hard at the stair rail for an instant to steady herself before she crept back to her room and shut herself in to think.

Kincheloe and her grandfather were planning some deed,— some wrong, secret act of violence. In no other way could she account for what she had witnessed in that glimpse of her grandfather's face — vindictiveness, triumph, fear. Yes; for fear was there. Fear was in his step now as he passed her door, fear but also determination. He was afraid of what he was to do, but he would go ahead. With what?

Harm — personal, bodily harm. To whom? To her friend of the Rock — Barney Loutrelle, Dick, who would take things over. She turned on her light and dropped into a chair. She was accusing her grandfather of directing a crime; and her grandfather did not direct crimes. Oh, other people had said so; but they had been demagogues, slanderers; no one with any sense believed them. Yet, yet men did direct crimes; some one did; crimes were committed. But not by her grandfather; no!

She heard a whine at her door and the pat of a dog's paw at the panel and, opening the door, she let in Lad and stroked his head. Something matted the white hair under his neck,— something which seemed to have frozen and dried there.

When she realized this was blood, she set her fingers to feeling for a cut from which it might have flowed; and when she could find no wound, she clung to Lad, demanding of him:

"It was the fox, Lad! You caught the fox! Lad, tell me — tell me, you caught the fox!"

But her own terrors denied her; her own terrors snatched at her heart and overwhelmed her struggles for calm thought. The dried, brown mat in the dog's hair was not about his jaws where it must have been had he caught and killed the fox; it was under his neck where it would have come if Lad had sniffed over some one who lay bleeding.

That deed, secret and violent, which Kincheloe and her grandfather had considered,— was it already done? What sort of deed?

"Ah, j'y étais mousquetaire!"

The voice, Barney Loutrelle's voice, seemed to float

to her from far away over the snow; and she seemed to see him, when she shut her eyes, lying stretched out, with Lad sniffing over him. She clung to the dog when she switched off her light, and she dragged him to the window with her while she gazed out over the lake, looking for a light on Resurrection Rock; but the night gave her only blackness except for the stars, and except for a square of yellow light on the snow almost immediately below her own windows.

She thought at first, as she gazed down at it, that her grandfather had left a lamp burning below; then she observed that could not be so, but that the light came from overhead, from an attic window where some flickering flame, such as a candle, was burning.

The attic was merely a storeroom, unused by any one. Who would be up there now? Miss Platt's husband? For what purpose?

Ethel went from her room to the steep stairs which led from the second-floor hall to a trapdoor letting into the garret. What she meant to say to Kincheloe, or what she intended to do, she did not yet know; but she climbed and pushed up the trapdoor quietly and entered the bare, unplastered space under the roof.

The electric lights, which had been supplied to the lower rooms, had not been installed here, and of course there was no heat. The space, called a storeroom, had become a repository for all the dilapidated furniture to which old people cling, for their children's cradles and rocking-horses and chairs which had been brought to St. Florentin years ago for Ethel and the other grandchildren. Ethel could see these things in the light of the lantern which stood upon the top of an up-ended trunk. She could hear some one tearing paper; but she could not see who it was till she pro-

ceeded further and discovered her grandfather squatted before a heap of old books and receipt cases and files, ledgers and bundles of documents, dust-encrusted and brown with age, which had lain undisturbed in that corner of the attic floor as long as Ethel could remember.

Her grandfather had cut the strings binding some of the bundles, and he sneezed from the cold and from the dust he raised as he tore the old paper across. He looked about suddenly and, seeing Ethel, rose to his feet.

"What d'you want here?" he demanded.

"What are you doing?" she returned in defiance.

"Grandfather, what's brought you up here?"

He advanced upon her for answer and, as the lantern now was behind him, she could not see his face. He seized her and by physical force thrust her toward the trapdoor.

"Lad came back with blood on him," she cried. "Blood!"

"Of course; he caught the fox. You — you — go to your bed and stay there."

She found her feet upon the stairs, and she went down; he lowered the trapdoor as she descended and, when he had closed it, she heard him move something upon it. For a few moments she stood trembling in the dark, too overwrought for any ordered thought; then she went to the end of the hall which was Miss Platt's and her husband's and rapped upon their door.

No one answered for some time; then Miss Platt's voice asked who was there; and when Ethel replied, Miss Platt came to the other side of the door but did not open it.

"What is the matter, Miss Carew?" she inquired.

"I want to see Mr. Kincheloe!" Ethel said.

"But he has retired."

"Nevertheless I must see him!"

"Why?"

"He knows."

"But my dear Miss Carew, surely you are upset; surely Mr. Cullen does not know —"

Ethel interrupted this by putting her hand upon the knob and trying the door, only to find it locked. She ceased to argue and went away.

When she returned to her room and threw herself across her bed, it was without thought of sleep.

"They've done it — they've done it," she repeated again and again to herself, without yet daring to allow any closer defining of "it." But whatever it was, "it" was done. Here in the house with her were two who had planned or had part in "it"; and one of them was her grandfather.

She heard him descend from the garret and go into his room; she heard him open the door of the stove in his room; she even heard — or fancied that she heard — the roar of flames in the stove consuming papers. But now she made no move. "It" was done; and whatever she might attempt could not undo it; she could only — do what?

Her mind halted at thinking of that and returned her to feelings, feelings new to her that day, emotions and sensations stirred wondrously and delightfully by Barney Loutrelle. For brief intervals she probably slept, at least she lost full consciousness in exhaustion, rousing to alarmed wakefulness in which she tried to think that all she had witnessed and felt that night must be a dream. Then passed a period in which, wide awake, she drove her mind to other thoughts: to people she knew in Wyoming, to visions of the plains, the old

ranch house which she first remembered; but that brought her back to her father; and he had wished to speak to Barney Loutrelle. She thought of her visit in Chicago, reviewing little, personal details,—the dance to which Bennet had taken her, the talk of her aunt Myra's friends, and her own reading aloud of *Les Misérables* to her uncle Lucas. But that brought her back to St. Florentin again.

Toward morning, the new moon stood in the cold sky; and when she saw its light, she thought of going out then. But she did not. She waited until dawn was spreading over the eastern sky before she went downstairs, carrying her shoes; she put them on and found her skis. The dogs roused and danced about her; she took them out with her and made for the lake.

The light had strengthened sufficiently to show her the gaunt outlines of Resurrection Rock, white and lifeless above the lake ice. When she glanced back toward St. Florentin, she saw that some one was following her from her grandfather's house, a man who must be Kincheloc. He did not motion to her or try to hail her; he merely followed. And suddenly she changed her plan and swung from the direct line to the shore and cut into the woods to the little clearing where Asa Redbird lived.

He possessed a little, two-roomed cabin of rough boards covered with builder's paper and with a sheet-iron stovepipe protruding through the roof. The door was closed and the windows were dark, and only such smoke rose from the pipe as the smoldering embers of the night fire would give; so she knew that Asa was not yet awake. But her approach with Lad and Lass stirred the Indian's dogs; and bedlam broke loose in the little cabin as she came up.

Asa Redbird was fully aroused, therefore, when he opened the door to look out. Having slept in his clothing, he was dressed; but even so, Ethel knew he would require a few moments before being ready to start; and as she glanced back through the trees, she saw that Kincheloe had delayed only an instant to watch her and now was going on toward the lake.

"I want you to come right away out to the Rock, Asa," she said. "I'm going there; come after me quick as you can. You understand?"

If he were Sam, questions would have followed; but Asa only looked over her again and said that he understood.

She turned away and started directly for the Rock. And as she went, she wondered if she had been cowardly and therefore had made a mistake in stopping for Asa. Kincheloe was ahead of her now and hurrying, without apparent regard for her and without looking back.

CHAPTER VI

THE HOUSE ON THE ROCK

AT moments, the sight of Kincheloe hastening ahead of her lessened her feeling that he had taken part in some violent act during the night. She thought that if he had been guilty of what she dreaded, he would be afraid to go openly to the Rock.

He was on skis, as was she; but when he reached the shore and encountered the hummocks of hard-frozen snow and spray which everywhere fringed the lake ice, he removed his skis and turned about, delaying. The dogs were accompanying her, scrambling along on the crust over the stretches where the wind had packed the snow hard and floundering willingly through the softer patches.

"Here, Lad; here, Lass!" Kincheloe shouted to them, his voice borne by the wind; and at the call the collies strained forward eagerly.

"Lad! Lass!" Ethel spoke to them in opposition.

The dogs looked about, puzzled; they halted, panting and tossing their heads from master shouting far ahead to mistress speaking to them from near-by. They stayed with Ethel, and Kincheloe proceeded alone out upon the smooth ice.

She reached the fringe of the snow and removed her skis. Watching Kincheloe, she thought that his attempt to take the dogs from her was not as trivial as he had tried to make it seem. He was still far ahead

of her, but he was exhibiting an uneasiness which restored to Ethel her fears of the night. Miss Platt's husband seemed to be losing determination; he no longer was hurrying but was glancing back often at her, and he was wandering off from the direct line to Resurrection Rock.

She noticed that something on the shore seemed to disturb him and, looking about, Ethel observed that Asa Redbird had emerged from the trees and was hastening after them. Asa was carrying his rifle, and this reinforcement evidently decided Kincheloe to abandon his race for the Rock; and although Ethel had been endeavoring only to reach the Rock before Kincheloe, now she called to him as he circled away to return to the shore and she ran after him. The dogs dashed ahead of her and jumped upon their master in all good friendship, yet they impeded his retreat, so Miss Platt's husband halted and waited.

When she had gone to his room in the night and his wife had protected him, Ethel had thought of him as frightened and cringing; just now, when she had been pursuing him, she had fancied him pale, with set lips and with eyes shifting and bright. But she found him quite different from her imaginings, so different indeed that she recalled his remarkable recovery of composure when she had surprised him listening at her grandfather's door.

"Hello, Miss Carew," he hailed her before she had time to catch her breath. "Changing your mind? You're not going to make a daybreak call after all?"

"Daybreak call?" she repeated. "Where?"

"On your friend of the train; or weren't you bound out to visit him?" he asked with unpleasant implication.

"Visit him?" she iterated, stupid in her astonishment at this tack which he had taken.

"Down, Lad!" Kincheloe yelled at the dog who had leaped on him again, and he struck at the collie too roughly. He glanced up at Ethel boldly, too boldly; and he carefully drew himself straight.

She had been thinking that crime and fear of consequences would have weakened this languorous, sensuous man whom she had known as Miss Platt's husband; but if he had been guilty of a crime, the result was to make him bolder than before.

"What were you coming out here for?" she demanded of him.

"I?" he said. "Why, I was following you."

"Following in front of me?"

"Oh, I thought you were steering this way."

"Because you knew I had reason to come out to see what you did last night? What did you do at the Rock last night? And why? Why did you do it?"

"Why did I do what?" he demanded of her in reply.

"What are you talking about?"

"About what you did to —"

"To whom?"

"To Mr. Loutrelle."

"Oh!" he laughed suddenly and queerly. "Oh!"

A few minutes ago she had thought of seizing Kincheloe when she caught him and of somehow holding him under restraint, but now she was recoiling from him.

"Are you crazy, Miss Carew?" he challenged, advancing a little. "Mr. Loutrelle's your dear friend of the train, I suppose. Why, I haven't even seen him — not even seen him. Why should I do anything to him, anyway? Tell me that!"

"Then where were you?"

"Where was I when?"

"Last night. I saw how you came in."

"Then you saw your grandfather meet me."

"Yes."

"Well —" he hesitated.

"What?"

"Where I was was his business, I should say — or Mrs. Kincheloe's. What's it of yours, anyway? What did you mean by coming to my room for me? What have you to talk about — out here yourself at this time in the morning?"

She made no response but to move away. He was serving his own purposes, not hers, by delaying her in argument; he walked beside her, talking in an attempt to divert her; failing, he abruptly parted from her, shouting to the dogs to follow him. She summoned them sharply and when they bounded to her, she seized their collars and held them against his repeated shouts. Then Asa approached, and Kincheloe walked rapidly away.

"You want me to stop him?" Asa inquired when he came up.

Ethel shook her head. "Just come with me."

She released the dogs and they stayed near-by while she proceeded with Asa. The Indian asked no questions and offered no comments, contenting himself with answering when she inquired about the chase of the fox the evening before. Yes, Merrill Kincheloe had started out with them; but he did not catch the fox, which Asa had shot. Asa did not know whether Kincheloe had caught another fox or not.

They began to see that the windows of the house, which always before had borne shutters, now exposed

panes to the light; they could see that paths had been dug on Resurrection Rock; they could see streaks and soil in the snow on the roof of the house which indicated that smoke recently had blown from the chimneys; but now no vapor was visible, not even such emanation of smoldering embers as had risen from Asa's stove-pipe. The house was bleak and lifeless, while the evidences of recent occupation, instead of diminishing, strangely increased its air of desolation. Probably this feeling was largely the result of images which possessed Ethel; but images affected the Indian, too.

She had not yet inquired of Asa whether he knew of any unusual occurrence here during the night because she had assumed that he would not know. Inquiring, she was answered now by a negative; but Asa's eyes roved uneasily about the house, and he plainly was reluctant to proceed.

Yet he helped her over the rough hummocks which the waves of the early winter had thrown up about the base of the Rock; they ascended the path at the northern end of the island to a clump of pine and cedar which clung in a hollow; they passed a clear space where the Indian fisherman of long ago had planted his squash and potatoes and where Halford — whom Ethel could just remember — had kept his vegetable garden.

She was thinking of Halford and wondering about him, not in any separation from her anxiety for Barney Loutrelle. Halford's vigil upon the Rock many years ago must have been connected, she thought, with all the strange circumstances surrounding the place which yesterday had reached a certain culmination in the coming of Barney Loutrelle from abroad under directions from London. Recalling to herself the extraordinary text

of those directions, she thought of her discussion of them with him — how he had showed her his ring, their long walk together, the delight of their delay in the little cabin and their impromptu luncheon of tea and crackers. Her shoulders jerked in a spasm of feeling, and she went on rapidly to the house.

The north end was the rear, and the door on that side opened, she supposed, into a kitchen. The house, which was perhaps forty feet wide and somewhat longer in its north and south dimension, was an adaptation of a chalet type, having two floors under a low, gracefully sloping roof which spread wide eaves over the front and back. There was no penthouse or projection at the rear; a couple of steps led to a solid door flanked by windows which were closed and locked, but which had curtains hanging within and shades raised about halfway. Ethel kept glancing at these windows as she approached; she found a bell handle beside the door and, pulling it, she heard a bell jangling within.

It roused no response; so she pulled several times and had Asa pound the door with the butt of his rifle. He shouted, and the dogs excitedly leaped about and barked loudly; but no one answered; no one appeared at a window; the whole house was still. Ethel led Asa around to the west side. She knew that the front of the house was so close to the edge of the Rock that the front door faced only a small platform at the top of a stairway cut in the rock and communicating with another platform, just above the lake level, which evidently was planned as a landing stage for small boats in summer. The west door, accordingly, was the main entrance, and Ethel found there a heavy, varnished oak door with three long lights set vertically

in place of panels in the upper half. The glass over the knob had been broken and pulled out.

A plain, storm door — now removed — ordinarily protected this oak door; so the glass must have been broken after the recent opening of the house. This evidence of violence accordingly shortened the moments that Ethel was willing to wait after vainly pulling the bell. She thrust an arm through the hole so plainly prepared for turning the lock from the outside and, opening the door, she entered.

"You want dogs?" Asa whispered to her, stepping into the hall immediately behind her and catching her arm to prevent her from proceeding alone.

"No; we'd better keep them out."

The Indian closed the door upon them. "You stay there!" he commanded. "You be quiet."

He had made no comment upon discovering the broken glass, as he had yet volunteered no remark about any of the proceedings. But now he said:

"Bagley got key from Wheedon; Barney Loutrelle come yesterday when Bagley right here and let him in. You know that?"

"I'd supposed so," Ethel said. She recognized that Asa was informing her that neither Bagley nor Barney Loutrelle would have broken the glass over the lock. Asa was maintaining his grasp of her sleeve while they stood listening and looking around. There was no sound from within the house; the dull, frequent noises were echoes of the ice cracking or lifting or settling as some current swept around Resurrection Rock and the warmer temperatures of the water encountered the frigid sheath of the surface.

The hall was wide and pleasant, lit by two windows as well as by the panes in the door; it was furnished

as a sort of lounging room with gay, bright wall paper picturing tall herons standing in river reeds. There were pretty, painted chairs in gray and gold, matching a table and a lounge which had cushions of black silk embroidered with gold herons. Underfoot was a handsome, silky rug in the blue and yellow designs of the Chinese weaver. It showed no wear or soil; nothing showed use.

Ethel stood amazed at the beauty and brightness of the place; as she had never viewed the interior and had observed the exterior only when all the windows were shuttered, she had thought of the rooms as gloomy or, at least, as severe and masculine; but now she found herself thinking of a woman in connection with this house on Resurrection Rock,— a woman of positive and good tastes.

Draperies hung in a wide doorway opening into a big room at the front. Ethel advanced and looked in and a moment later she entered, with Asa no longer holding her sleeve, but close at her side.

This room, which extended the full width of the house, had windows to the east and south and west and was so large that Ethel could not be certain at a glance that it was unoccupied. The bright, diffused light from the clear dawn flooded the place through the many windows and fell upon a large, heavy, carved table near the center of the room; upon chairs and a couch on one side; upon a grand piano at the east end with a tall lamp and a music cabinet near-by. In the wall to Ethel's left, which was the interior wall, was a large and beautiful fireplace with a high, marble mantel. A small table by one of the south windows displayed an old bronze figure; a larger statue of marble stood upon a graceful pedestal. Bookcases full

of books were in the wall on both sides of the mantel; upon the mantelshelf were antiques,—bowls and vases; and above were old rapiers and a steel gauntlet from some ancient suit of mail.

Ethel had made sure now that no one was in the room; and it showed no sign of disorder or of violence done there; yet sight of the room itself amazingly disturbed her. She did not know why, at first; she merely felt frightened as by something uncanny. Asa noticed her excitement and looked inquiringly about the room again before he asked in a whisper:

“Something here you see?”

“No,” she said. “It’s — Asa, I’ve been in this room. I’ve never been in this house before; but I’ve been in this room!”

“Yes?” Asa inquired, unable to comprehend her.

She walked about the room, and the feeling grew stronger. The wood paneling of the walls between the windows, the window casings and the mantel were all old, she saw,—much older than the house itself. Most of the furniture was old,—the tables, chairs and foot-rests. These and the bronzes and the marble were not mere copies, in wood and metal and stone, of work of some past period; the materials themselves were old: the handiwork was old.

Ethel was familiar with the American liking for buying “an interior” abroad and transporting and installing it *in toto* within new walls; and it was plain to her that this room once had been part of a French building. French of the sixteenth or the seventeenth century, French of the periods which one associated with Louis XIV and Henry of Navarre. Ethel’s recognition of this partly explained her impression of familiarity here; when she was a child at her aunt’s

château, aunt Cecilia had taken her on visits to châteaux of many of uncle Hilaire's friends. She might indeed have been in this very room before. It was hopeless for her to try to recall from her memories of when she was five and eight where it was that she had previously visited this salon; moreover, her mind was not now dwelling upon what might have been her own association with this room. What was Barney Loutrelle's? For this remarkable salon was, she knew, the heart of the house; he had been sent from across the water to this room.

She moved nearer the mantel and gazed at the design incised over the fireplace; it bore a dignified, formal device like — yes, very like — the device wrought upon Barney Loutrelle's ring. Certainly his ring, which Azen Mabo had taken with him from Noah Jo, belonged to the epoch and to the station of this room. Such a lady as had first worn that old ring must have entertained in a salon like this.

Recollections of many events were rushing through her mind, connecting themselves with this room. She remembered that several years ago her grandfather had made Wheedon take him through this house and when she asked him what it was like he had refused to tell her, — without reason, it then seemed. Now she knew that there was a definite, compelling reason which he had found when he viewed this room; her grandfather knew the significance of these things on Resurrection Rock; he had known why Barney Loutrelle had been sent here, and he had taken it as a threat to himself which he had met by sending Kincheloe out last night.

She forbade herself further conjectures and began to examine the room more closely for evidence of re-

cent event. There were cold ashes in the fireplace and oil in the lamps which had wicks black from burning. She went through the door in the north wall at the east end and found a large dining room, all modern, with graceful Sheraton furniture which was not older than the year of the building of the house. Next was a kitchen where the ashes of a wood fire lay cold in the stove upon which stood a kettle filled with water, cold but not frozen. All the fires in the house had burnt out so recently that some heat remained. There were a few provisions in the kitchen cupboards, evidently freshly bought; some were leavings from a meal.

Ascending with Asa to the second floor, Ethel found only bedrooms and baths above,—four large bed-chambers and three smaller rooms in a suite at the rear for servants. All had modern furniture and fittings. Barney Loutrelle seemed to have occupied—or to have planned to occupy—one of the large rooms; Ethel found brushes and a comb, which evidently were his, upon a dressing stand; the suit case which he had carried was in the closet; it had been unpacked and its contents laid in the dresser drawers. The bed in that room was made up with fresh linen; but it had not been slept in.

Some one had slept in the bed in the first of the servants' rooms in the back of the house; but there were no personal belongings in that room.

"Bagley sleep here, I think," Asa volunteered. "Night before last night."

Ethel asked how he knew, and Asa informed her that he had seen a light in this part of the house upon the night before last and early last evening. "But Bagley leave here last night 'bout nine o'clock. He had enough."

"Enough?" Ethel repeated. "Enough of what?"

"That's all he said; he had 'enough.'" Asa was merely quoting the expression.

"He said that to you? Where did you see him?"

"No; he said that to Wheedon. I did not talk with him, but I saw him at Wheedon's — about nine o'clock. Wheedon said Bagley come to stay there all night; he had 'enough.'"

"Then Mr. Loutrelle went to Wheedon's too, Asa?"

"No; he was not there."

"Where was he?"

"I do not know; here, I suppose," Asa said uneasily. "Somebody had light here late? What do you know?"

She had not told Asa what she knew and what she had supposed, because she had expected that they immediately would discover evidence which would make unnecessary any explanation of her summons to accompany her here. But they had found nothing except that Bagley and Barney Loutrelle both had been in the house and neither was here now.

Asa had accounted for Bagley's absence, but not for Barney's. She asked Asa to go down into the cellar with her to make certain that no one was anywhere in the house; and the unwillingness with which he accompanied her into the dark passages made plain to her what the Indian was thinking. They searched thoroughly, however, before they returned to the salon. No one, living or dead, was in the house; nowhere had they come upon sign of violence or indication of cause for Barney Loutrelle's disappearance.

"Where's he gone, Asa?" Ethel appealed finally.

"How do I know?" the Indian returned irritably, and Ethel appreciated that his nerves were on edge.

His dark eyes peered about restlessly; and she knew that, whatever Asa had thought when she brought him to the house, now superstitions controlled him. He was remaining close to her and thinking again, undoubtedly, about Bagley who so recently had left because he had had "enough" and of the stories repeated about Resurrection Rock.

Ethel had thought of some physical means being employed,— a blow struck or a shot fired. But might the danger have been more — extraordinary than that? Asa seemed to think so.

She started, seeing a shadow following her on the western wall of the great room. It was her own shadow; light was streaking across the floor, and cold, dazzling beams were striking in through the low windows to the east as the rim of the sun pushed up from the frozen, motionless lake. East and south, as far as Ethel could see, ice and ice and ice extended; all the world in that direction was frozen, limitless ice, smooth and unbroken. Below the ice lay water, above it only sky and sun. Still elements alone bounded Resurrection Rock which seemed set on the very edge of creation, a threshold from warm, vibrant, pulsing life to the realm of that to which souls from cold bodies flow. White, gleaming, spectral shapes arose far away toward the sun and glided now this way and that, the wind drawing up light snowflakes and wafting them to and fro.

Ethel struck her hands together and with a jerk turned around to look out the opposite windows to the near, forested shore where a curl of smoke above the trees marked Asa Redbird's little home where Mrs. Redbird was, undoubtedly, frying breakfast. Farther away she could see St. Florentin; and she thought, not

of the message from her father and of the letter from London, but of her grandfather watching Resurrection Rock through his glass and of Kincheloe's return to her grandfather last night.

She heard scratching at the door and, remembering the dogs, she recalled the brown mat in Lad's hair and how Kincheloe that morning had twice attempted to take the dogs from her.

"Let them in, Asa," she directed.

When the door was opened and the dogs ran in, she thought that they rushed into the salon because she was there; but Lad only brushed against her on his way to the further end of the great room where he thrust his head down and smelled of the floor, whimpering and scrambling about in a circle. Lass blundered about near him so excitedly that Ethel followed to see what was there, only to find a space of bare, varnished floor. But her interest stirred Lad to leap upon her and dash to the door on the south which communicated with the outside steps down the Rock to the summer landing.

When she looked through the glass of this door, Ethel observed for the first time that those steps showed the depressions of deep footsteps, blunted and half filled with the lighter drift which had been blowing about since early morning. The door was locked and bolted but, upon being unfastened, readily opened.

The dogs jumped into the snow and floundered down the steps to the ice where they shook themselves and rolled over, barking. They ran out of sight about the base of the Rock; then they reappeared, barking and so plainly trying to lead that Ethel went down to them.

She found half-filled furrows in the snow which must have been made by the dogs some hours earlier; farther away from the Rock, the ice was smooth and

showed no footmarks. She was fearfully expecting that Lad was leading her to the sort of horror which she had believed to be in the house when she came upon chunks of ice standing beside a hole, about a yard in diameter, which had been chopped through to the water.

Young ice had frozen over, not yet half an inch thick. She knelt and leaned forward with her hands on the edge of the hole, peering down through the new, glassy crystal into the dark, deep water underneath. She felt footsteps on the floor of ice and, looking about, she saw that Asa after some delay had descended from the Rock. He came to her side and gazed into the hole.

"Water hole," he said quietly. "Bagley chop it here yesterday to fill buckets. Bagley did not chop it, I think, so big."

"Why did the dogs want us to come out here, Asa?" she demanded, still on her knees.

Redbird stared at her for an instant; and she was aware that the action of the dogs in the house had banished from him the fright of the supernatural which had seized him.

"For drink, maybe," he suggested.

"You think that?"

Asa for answer thrust a foot forward and with his heel broke the young ice. "You drink, Lad? Lass?" he invited.

Lass did not move, and Lad thrust his nose down only to sniff unsatisfactorily, and lift his head again. "They want no drink," Redbird said. "What you think?"

She stood up, but she could not speak to the Indian the words for what she thought. She moved

slowly, head inclined and attempting to see through the heavy ice; but nothing but the blackness of water rewarded her. The Rock rose so abruptly from the lake bottom that the water was twenty or thirty feet deep.

"Who chopped that hole bigger, do you suppose, Asa?" she appealed at last of the Indian who had not joined her in her vain walking about, but who was standing, looking away over the ice.

Redbird refused to commit himself.

"Would Mr. Loutrelle have made it larger?" she asked.

"Why?" Asa returned.

"Yes; that's it; why? Why, Asa?" she cried, suddenly losing control of herself. "Why should any one want that hole bigger?"

"Nobody would," Redbird assured positively, "for water."

"No," she said. "No; no; no!" She meant, first, agreement with Asa; then revolt at, and denial of, the images in her own mind. The Indian and she now understood the same events alike; Asa, indeed, had discovered more than she.

"What kept you up there?" she asked him.

He said he would show her; and together they ascended the steps in the Rock. He had blocked the door so it had not latched and locked them out; so now, shutting out the dogs, he led her to the part of the floor where the dogs had been sniffing.

"Somebody washed right here, you see. Somebody did it last night, I think; somebody scrubbed. But no place else."

He fell to one knee, placing his face close to the floor and shutting one eye to glance with the other

along the sunlit boards and illustrate his method of discovery of the fact. Ethel knelt and saw that the sunlight glinted on soft dust except in a space, roughly oval and about six feet long, where no dust appeared, but where the bright, hard surface of varnish was scratched and dulled by recent scrubbing and scraping. She pulled off her gloves and with bare finger tips felt the difference in the varnish there and elsewhere.

"Somebody burned cloth in fireplace," Asa informed, going to the hearth and producing a handful of ashes which exhibited the woven texture of cloth; he produced also a charred bit of shaped wood which had been the back of a scrubbing brush. Asa offered it to her and she put out her hand to take it, and then she could not touch it. Blood had stained it before it had been burnt; Kincheloe had put it in the fire to burn away — blood.

Asa had let go of it, thinking that she was taking it, and it dropped to the floor between them. It was to make sure that such trifles as this were completely burnt, she thought, that Kincheloe wished to come to the Rock early this morning. That is the reason her grandfather had sent Kincheloe to the Rock; for she knew that Kincheloe would not have come here this morning of his own accord.

She could think these things; but she could not say them. Instead, she argued with herself aloud against them. "What does that mean, Asa?"

"You tell me," the Indian said.

No doubt at all now of what Asa believed; but when he stood waiting upon her, she could not tell him how she had watched her grandfather wandering about his house at midnight and how she had seen Kincheloe

come in. But she had to tell Asa something; so she told him about the mat in Lad's hair.

Asa went out and examined the dog.

"Nothing there now," he reported when he returned. "Hair there all cut off."

This brought her to the door to witness for herself that, since her discovery early that morning, some one had clipped the hair close under the dog's jaw. Who had done that? Kincheloe? Or Miss Platt? Or — her grandfather?

Vehemently she denied that last doubt to herself. It could not have been her grandfather who had done that cutting which meant knowledge of and aid in concealing murder; for it had become plain to her that some one had been killed; and it was no less plain to Asa. He had entertained the agency of spirits only when it seemed that Barney Loutrelle had been made away with and no trace left. Now Asa knew that spirits would not have needed to scrub a floor with a brush which had to be burned; spirits would not have required to enlarge a water hole in the lake ice.

"Somebody was killed here, Asa?"

"What else to think?"

"But who — Asa, who?"

"Who was here last night?" Asa returned logically.

She flinched. He meant, of course, her friend of yesterday, Barney Loutrelle. Hopelessly she had been struggling to down that conviction as she had been trying to down the dread that her grandfather could be concerned in crime.

"But who would have done it?" she demanded of Asa.

"Who did not want you to come here this morning?"

"Yes; but why? He could have had no reason."

For a moment the Indian did not reply; he faced her, thinking. "Maybe —" he began.

"Maybe what, Asa?"

"Somebody else have reason."

It was a good deal for Asa Redbird to say; his rôle — the rôle of an Indian remaining in a land owned and occupied by the white — was to keep free of their affairs as much as possible; to serve and observe but, so far as might be, never to interfere. Certainly never to accuse lightly. Ethel fully knew this; and she knew what Asa Redbird meant; more than that, she knew him not simply as an Indian, but as an individual, — a serious, honest man, a devout Catholic, taught in the tradition of the old Jesuits who more than two centuries ago came to Lake Huron to make converts among the Indians. Those Jesuits had made converts among the red men who had borne torture and death at the stake for their faith; and something about Asa Redbird made Ethel think of them now.

"Who — who do you mean, Asa?" she asked directly.

"Where did Merrill Kincheloe come from last night?" Redbird said.

He had made the accusation direct; and, looking at him, Ethel knew that Asa had formed his opinion, not alone from evidences which he had discovered this morning, but from previously held thoughts in regard to her grandfather. Asa had been willing to accuse him because, from among the few in the neighborhood who might have directed the doing of this thing, Asa could think of only Lucas Cullen; and the red man had observed the white, whom he had served without expressing any opinion, for twenty years.

It made her flinch again; yet with the wince traveled

a feeling of respect for this poor man who had accused to the granddaughter the rich man who most absolutely controlled his fate and that of his little family in the shack in the woods; and she thought of Asa now as holding to his charge, under question, as resolutely as would Father Laurent, who visited the little chapels in the woods, or as good Father Benitot of St. Ignace.

She said nothing more about her grandfather or about Kincheloe; she merely arranged with Asa that he was to stay here in the house, or at least upon Resurrection Rock, until she returned or sent some one to relieve him. She was going to St. Florentin, and Asa was to see that no one entered to disturb anything in the house or to alter the hole in the ice; he was to keep watch against Kincheloe particularly.

Asa did not like staying there alone; but he agreed to do it, keeping the dogs with him. He came outdoors when she left and, when she looked back several minutes later, she saw him standing before the house; she waved to him, and he raised an arm in reply. Then she thought about him no more.

CHAPTER VII

LUCAS' TRICK

THE tumult in Ethel's soul swept about her grandfather and about Barney Loutrelle. She could see her grandfather again as first she saw him yesterday, hiding behind a tree, watching her friend start off toward the Rock.

"Ah, j'y étais mousquetaire!"

She seemed to hear the echo as Barney Loutrelle went off singing,—his warm voice full with the joy and goodness of living. He had been singing to himself because he was happy and stirred, and he had been still singing, perhaps, when he had passed out over this stretch of ice. And where was he now? Chill barbs of terror thrust within her; she seemed, strangely, to see his hands which yesterday she had liked to watch while he held them before their fire in the cabin; but now she saw them clenched and cold against the sand of the lake bottom. Her thoughts played horrible tricks against her attempts not to imagine him. Where was his ring, she wondered. Had they—the merciless, impersonal “they” whom she pictured as doing what had been done—had they taken away his ring or left it in his pocket? His mother's ring, so he had thought, which went so marvelously with that extraordinary old room restored on Resurrection Rock.

"There is one here, Philip Carew, who would speak to you!"

Her thoughts flew, in their frantic circle, to the letter from London which had told Barney Loutrelle about her father and about the Rock and about her coming here and about that Bagley, never seen here before, who had come and — having had "enough" — had left. Enough of what?

She could guess; he was probably ignorant and superstitious and readily affected by the stories about Resurrection Rock. She would not permit herself again to become confused by superstitions, though all this did seem to have started with a message from her father, who was dead.

Her grandfather, who was living and very material, had long been afraid of that Rock; but not so much when the house remained empty as when Barney Loutrelle and Bagley went there. Her grandfather had endeavored to prevent the occupation of the house and, failing, had sent out Merrill Kincheloe and waited with loaded rifle as she had seen, until Kincheloe's late return.

But did she know that her grandfather had sent Kincheloe to do what he had done? Was she to believe that her grandfather even knew truly what Kincheloe did? No; he couldn't know; Kincheloe could not have confessed the whole fact to him. That must be the explanation!

This thought sent a leap in her pulses which made her almost happy for the instant before she realized that, however it might be, yet Barney Loutrelle was dead. Kincheloe, desiring money, thinking only in terms of money — much money, in these days — had done it; but her grandfather still might be innocent.

She remembered that she had read in some of those defenses of him, which had been published in reply to the muckraking attacks, that sometimes Lucas Cullen had suffered through the overzealousness of weak underlings who had misunderstood his purposes and done things for which he unjustly was blamed. Kincheloe was a weak underling, capable of complete misconceptions or of criminal bungs of a commission. Ethel did not argue herself out of belief that her grandfather had instigated Kincheloe to take some action against Barney Loutrelle,—to frighten him off, perhaps, as Bagley seemed to have been frightened.

She regained the shore and put on her skis. The woods were empty and silent. Approaching St. Florentin, everything seemed as usual on a winter morning. At some distance she could hear the exhaust of the gasoline engine pumping water and charging the batteries for the day; she could hear an axe at leisurely intervals, and she knew that Sam Green Sky was comfortably employed in the wood-shed.

She had kept a lookout for Kincheloe while proceeding through the woods and, coming in sight of the road to Quesnel, she glanced down it to see if he might be making off. She thought that probably he had escaped from the neighborhood by this time, and she was considering ways of having him overtaken when the front door of her grandfather's house opened and Kincheloe appeared upon the porch. The sight startled her, particularly as he seemed undisturbed, and as he stood, without cap or coat, watching her approach. He returned into the house in a moment, leaving the door slightly open, so that she went in at once and met her grandfather coming down the hall from his office.

"Well," he hailed her. "Well; you're back from your little sunrise expedition, Kincheloe tells me. Well; well; tell me all about it."

"Grandfather!" she cried, breathless from her excitement and from hurrying. "He was just here. I saw him!" She looked about, but Kincheloe was out of sight now. "He mustn't go away; he—"

"What's the trouble with you?" her grandfather demanded, seizing her arm. "Step in here and explain what's come over you."

He used just enough force to overcome her physical opposition. She did not struggle violently, as his grasp warned her that if she exerted more strength, he would also employ more and overpower her. Besides, he was her grandfather, and he had played with her and carried her about on his back when she was a child; he had petted her and liked to hold her in his arms, producing from his pockets pretty, extravagant trifles; he was the one who used to talk most to her about her mother and tell her what her mother had done when she was a child.

He was angry with her for what she had done in the night and for having gone out early this morning; but he was big and firm-handed and so much as usual, with the faint, familiar odor of shaving soap as always just after he had shaved in the morning, that she cried out confidently: "Grandfather, you don't know what he's done!"

"Who?" he demanded, his grip tightening in an unconscious muscular spasm. He guided her into the front room and closed the door.

"Who done?"

"Kincheloe!"

"What? Miss Platt's husband?" he repeated his

old phrase with slow deliberateness. "Miss Platt's husband?"

He consciously tried to mention Kincheloe with his customary, slighting contempt; but he did not succeed. When he had spoken quickly in the hall, he had referred to Miss Platt's husband as Kincheloe, and this was the first time he had ever done so to Ethel's knowledge; and his tone, when he had said the name suddenly, also had betrayed the effect of an occurrence which had changed the relation of Miss Platt's husband to him since last night.

"Well; well," he demanded. "What's he done that I don't know? Tell me all about it," he invited.

He let go of her arm and stood back, studying her and taking up his position between her and the door; and he scrutinized her, not as Ethel, his granddaughter, but as a girl who bore a danger to him yet indefinite; so she saw him not as her grandfather, but as a huge, old man with strong hands and relentless jaw and with squinting, warmthless eyes who wanted to make her talk. "Tell me all about it," he invited again. "I want to know all about it."

But she faced him silently, not conscious of what processes were controlling her, until she found herself shaking in a spasm of revulsion from him. Perhaps it was his voice or his manner, imitating his invitation of yesterday when he had made her detail to him the affairs which he already knew and pretended that he did not; with this came cumulated recollections of acts for which responsible men had accused him; there came to her, too, Asa Redbird's recent charge. Altogether she suddenly knew that she had nothing to tell her grandfather, and that he knew all that she did and far more. He knew not

only what had been done last night at the Rock but why it had been done and everything else about it. He was concerned in making her talk only to learn what she knew and what disturbance she threatened to him.

"You know about it; all; all!" she cried aloud. "Oh, grandfather!" And she shrank back before him under her share of the horror and guilt of what had been done.

This gave him a twinge; he was not prepared for her taking it that way. Whatever he had planned to say to her since the hour in the night when she had followed him to the attic and he had driven her downstairs, he now was caught for a moment at a loss. But he quickly restored himself.

"You just say I don't know what he's done — Miss Platt's husband — and now I know about it — all — all!" he mocked the despair of her cry. "Suppose you speak to me calmly and plain, if you can. What's all exciting you so much, and what did you go out to the Rock for before sunrise?"

"To see what Kincheloe — what you had Kincheloe do."

"Oh, I had Kincheloe do something out there, did I?"

She could not answer him for the suffocation in her breast; muscles seemed to be tugging tight all through her; she felt so stiff that it was as though she could not move and if she lost her balance, as she swayed, she must topple over.

"Well, what did you see?" her grandfather demanded of her.

"That he was not there, grandfather!"

"Who — Kincheloe?"

"Oh — you know!"

"Who?" he demanded loudly.

"Barney Loutrelle."

"Oh! Oh! He wasn't? Well, why wasn't he? What'd happened to him? Is that what's stirred you up so? What'd happened to him?"

"He'd been made away with!"

"Hey? Killed, you mean?"

"Yes; killed; killed."

"Hey? You saw him dead?"

"No; but —"

"But what?" he advanced upon her, leaning over her when she did not respond. "What did you see?"

And she knew that he needed answer to that; for, though he knew what had been done, he could not know — except from Kincheloe's own report — how well or how badly Kincheloe had done and what evidence of the deed Kincheloe might have left.

So she stepped away when her grandfather advanced and, defying him, she refused reply; and so, for a moment, she saw fear — fear such as that which she had surprised upon him in the night — alter his eyes; then his fear was gone as her refusal to answer him persisted and he became convinced that she had seen little, after all.

"Have you enough shame left to realize what you have just been saying to me?" he assailed her, raising his hand clenched but for his huge forefinger with which he threatened her. "Kincheloe has killed your fine friend of the train, Barney Loutrelle, you said. I had him do it! Eh? Eh? Say to me, do you mean that? Miss Platt's husband — and I — have 'made away with' Barney Loutrelle?"

"Grandfather!"

"Stop your grandfathering me! Answer plain

what you mean. If you don't mean that, say what you do!"

He shook his finger so close to her face that he struck her forehead and nose. She put up a hand and caught his wrist and tried to thrust his hand aside; but his arm was tense, and she could not. "Do you mean that?" he demanded, striking her face again with his finger.

"Yes!"

"Eh? So Kincheloe — and I had him do it — killed your Barney Loutrelle, you believe?"

"Yes."

He jerked his wrist out of her grasp and stepped back, looking down at her and laughing. Somehow she had immensely gratified him; she could not imagine by what perversion the fact could be but by accusing Kincheloe — and him — of making away with Barney Loutrelle, she had done just what her grandfather had desired.

He continued to laugh at her, and he laughed as she had never heard him, or any one else, laugh before. There was no amusement in his laugh; relief was there mingled with something else; but only the relief was recognizable.

"I must have Miss Platt hear you," he said, when he was through laughing. "And your grandmother." He stepped to the door and, opening it, called first for Miss Platt and then for his wife. Miss Platt appeared quickly, coming in with the impersonal, observant interest with which she replied to summons to take dictation. It seemed to Ethel, when she heard her grandmother descending the stairs, that her grandfather's wife was obeying him reluctantly; but she was obeying, as she always obeyed. When she entered the room, her eyes by habit sought his and found their in-

struction. She looked at her granddaughter, and Ethel felt that she wanted to warn her of something but could not.

"Now we will all hear your opinions," her grandfather said; and, before the others, he made her accuse Kincheloe and himself again. Then he went once more to the door.

"Lieutenant Loutrelle!" he called. "Mr. Barney Loutrelle, will you step in here!"

Ethel heard him making the summons as to some one who was alive; she heard a reply,— a voice which might be Barney Loutrelle's and a step in the hallway. Her grandfather spoke again, and the voice which again answered made her shut her eyes for dizziness. It brought back the echo of the song which, heard yesterday, had been resounding within her: "*Ah! J'y étais mousquetaire!*"

He was not dead! She opened her eyes to see him in the doorway; he entered and came toward her, speaking to her. Everything wavered about him; but he did not waver in her sight. She cried out — or whispered — something in reply to the words he was saying. She knew neither what she said nor how she said it.

Her grandfather was grabbing at her, saying something; and Miss Platt was addressing her; but Ethel heeded neither of them. She recognized that they were demanding, in their different ways, that she apologize and demean herself and ask forgiveness of them, and of Kincheloe, and of God, for her reckless accusations. But she could not think about them; besides, nothing about them had changed. Barney Loutrelle was alive; yet — yet everything else was the same. They had done what they had done; but not to her friend.

"I thought you were dead!" she was explaining to him. "You see, I thought they had killed you."

She had to touch him, so overpowering had been the terrors in which she imagined him dead; and when she did it, wholly regardless of the others, and when she found him warm and strong, he clasped her hand and held it, his pulses throbbing with hers. For though he could not comprehend what had happened, yet he was feeling only for her and with her; he had appreciated that somehow these others — her people — had been playing with her and tricking her, and that they had used him in their trick to take an advantage over her. He realized that, in doing this for themselves, they cruelly had won him an advantage of another sort over her, and he would not let her show this advantage without showing that she held similar advantage over him.

"I came to find you as early as I dared," he told her. "I came here just to see you. They told me you would be down soon. I had no idea you had gone out."

"I went to the Rock for you. You see, I thought they had hurt you and —"

Her grandfather interrupted them loudly; he ordered her to go at once to her room; but she disregarded him. A few minutes ago she stood against him when she felt herself solitary in her combat with him; then she had been willing alone to defy him for herself and for her father, who was dead, and for her new friend who had come to her from her father and whom — she had believed — they had killed. Now she had regained him; his strength and thought and will joined with hers again for the encounter which they would take up together. She, at least, much more fully comprehended

the nature of what confronted them; for it was plain that they — Barney and she — in some way yet unknown to either of them, involved her grandfather and Kincheloe in undertakings which stopped at nothing. It was not Barney Loutrelle who had lain, bleeding, on the floor of that grand old salon in the new house on Resurrection Rock; but some one last night had expired there and been carried out to the lake.

But Barney knew nothing of that yet; her explanation of her fears for him meant nothing except that she had been alarmed about him and had tried to aid him.

"Leave her alone!" he said. "Leave her alone!" he repeated, putting himself between her and her grandfather. "She has something to say to me; and I have much to tell her. I came to see her. You can give us this room, or we will go out; won't we, Miss Carew?" he asked her.

"Yes," she said. "Yes."

"What?" her grandfather threatened. "What? You think you will go with this — this —" he stopped with a snort of contempt. But he was not feeling contempt, Ethel saw as she watched him. He had won this morning over Barney Loutrelle; for Barney had not known even that any one had been killed at the Rock. Her grandfather had won over her; for he had found out that she had so little idea as to who was dead that she thought it was Barney, and he had succeeded in making her ridiculous when she accused him. But now fear was returning to him; he feared to permit her, knowing what she knew, to go with Barney.

For a moment he seemed to consider laying hands on her and by physical force constraining her from going out; but now he recognized that Barney would

meet him by strength greater than his own; so he threatened her instead.

"I can forgive your imbecility and madness. God helping me, I can forgive my child's child even what she has said to me this day. But disobey me again, and I shall never forgive you. Obedience in my own house and from my children dependent upon me, I shall have. So step over the threshold of that door in disobedience to me, and you shall never come into my house again. Now go; go to your room and go to your knees, and later, when you are yourself, I shall send for you."

The very vibration of his rasping, powerful voice seemed to shake her; his words took impact like blows of his finger which had struck her face. Even if she were cool, she could not at one moment comprehend consequences of the decision which then and there she had to make; she knew that already she had made it, so she gazed only an instant longer at her grandfather before looking up at the friend at her side.

"I am ready to go with you," she said.

CHAPTER VIII

A COMPACT

SHE crossed the threshold, which her grandfather had forbidden her, and went to the front door. Barney Loutrelle did not accompany her but stayed behind, keeping between her and her grandfather; but the old man offered no interference of any sort. Indeed, he turned away, after she had definitely disobeyed him, and seemed to pay no more heed to her or to Barney.

"My cap and coat," she heard Barney say to some one. "I gave them to Mr. Cullen."

"I will find them," Miss Platt said crisply, and she brought the garments to him in the hall. Ethel still was clothed as she had been when she had gone out before, so she opened the door and stepped on to the porch; Barney followed and closed the door behind them. She understood, when she looked at him, that his delay had been not solely to guard her against force from her grandfather; Barney had wished to avoid leading, or urging her, to the decision she had made. She referred to that decision now, saying:

"I'm glad. Where shall we go?"

He glanced down the road toward the buildings of the old St. Florentin village. "There are plenty of roofs."

"Yes," she said, and she jerked about excitedly as she heard some one at the door. It opened, and her

grandmother came out into the cold without wrap or shawl. She laid a slender, trembling hand upon Ethel, and her old eyes besought her granddaughter with piteous pleadings.

"Debsie," she said, calling Ethel again by her mother's name. "My little Deborah's daughter, don't set yourself against your father once more."

Ethel was familiar with the habit by which, under emotion, her grandmother might confuse in the same sentence herself and her mother. Her grandmother was begging her not to set herself against her grandfather as her mother had done. Ethel had not known that her mother had set herself against her grandfather; she had always believed that her father had undertaken the quarrel.

"It may not be too late yet," her grandmother continued to plead. "Come back into the house with me, and I will try what I can do with him."

"I don't want you to," Ethel said; then her voice broke. "Oh, grandmother!" She put her arms about the slight, straight little old lady and kissed her passionately. "Good-by, grandmother."

"There; there," the old lady said, patting her. Her own eyes were brimming, but she made no further effort to beg Ethel to remain. Instead she spoke only of her husband.

"Your grandfather was a great man, Ethel," she said proudly. "It is so easy for young folks, who know things only as they are, to judge hard what was done in the old days. You think of wood as valuable; but in my day, when I was a girl in the forest below here on the other side, the great, tall trees were just obstructions; my father and his neighbors would slash them, burn them or do anything to clear the ground of

them; then your grandfather and other young men came and turned the wood into gold and people said — people said —”

She stopped with a hiccough. “No one, Debsie, can ever go through life without doing wrongs to somebody, do you think? And if a great man does great things, are only the ordinary little wrongs of the tiny to be forgiven him?”

A tear fell from her eye, and she turned to the door which her husband had reopened.

“Come in, Sarah,” he bade, and she obeyed.

Ethel felt queerly hollow as she went down the steps with Barney Loutrelle. Her grandmother did not know what had been done just last night, she assured herself, when she weakened. Her grandmother was thinking of that something — greater than a little wrong — which she admitted had been done long ago and which had brought about the break with Ethel’s mother; now there was something more. This seemed to be a consequence of the other wrong which had arisen out of conditions long ago in the vanished forests of the tall trees; somehow it had taken in Resurrection Rock with its old French salon in the newly built house and Barney Loutrelle and his ring and the person — yet unknown — who had gone to the Rock last night and been killed.

Ethel was walking, side by side with Barney, in the wide ruts which the wood sled had made in the snow; they were both without skis for, without further discussion, they understood that they were to stop for conference in the first suitable building of the deserted village; so when the old store offered its sound roof and walls and windows, they entered. The floor was covered with light drift snow, and Ethel put her hand

upon the gray, cracked counter; Barney caught her elbow and gave her a lift up on the counter, where she sat while he stood in the snow nearer the window and looked back toward her grandfather's house. No one had followed them; no one appeared to be taking any further interest in them.

"You saw Kincheloe this morning?" Ethel asked.

"I heard some one speak to him; he was in the house, but I did not see him," Barney said.

"He would keep out of sight now," she said and, as briefly as possible, she told Barney what followed her arrival at St. Florentin and of her grandfather's attempt to bribe her to tell about him, of Kincheloe's absence during the afternoon and evening and of the peculiar events of the night; she told of her visit to the Rock with Asa Redbird and their discoveries; and she received in return full report from Barney.

He had stopped at Wheedon's in the afternoon, as Ethel had supposed, and there had learned that the man named Bagley, who had never been seen in the neighborhood before, had arrived a day earlier and exhibited a letter from Marcellus Clarke which authorized him to obtain the keys to the house on Resurrection Rock. Wheedon had furnished him with the keys and, at Bagley's request, Wheedon and his wife had accompanied Bagley to the Rock where they had opened the house. The Wheedons then had returned, apparently after filling Bagley with the neighborhood gossip and superstition about Resurrection Rock.

Bagley stayed at the house, having brought a supply of food; he built fires and had everything ready when Barney arrived. He proved to be a steward sort of person — a man about forty-five, accustomed to obey orders without inquiring into reasons. He did things

for Mr. Clarke whom Bagley knew as an attorney concerned with confidential matters for many important people. Bagley claimed to have no idea who owned the house or why he, himself, had been sent there; he had never heard of the house until he received the letter from Mr. Clarke, who was just then abroad, instructing him to go to Mr. Wheedon's, obtain the keys, open the house and there await a young officer, who was described in the letter, who might arrive shortly after the first of the year and who would give the name Barney Loutrelle. Bagley then was to "look after" Lieutenant Loutrelle's wants until further directions arrived.

Bagley had shown Barney the letter; and though Bagley disclaimed further knowledge of the affair, Barney had the impression that Bagley either was concealing some additional knowledge or that something had happened after Bagley's arrival at the Rock which he would not report. Barney tried to see if giving the name "Dick"—as he had been told to do in Adley's letter—would serve any purpose; but it meant nothing to Bagley who seemed to have no idea of "giving things over" to "Dick." Indeed, this experiment only increased Bagley's disturbance about the whole business. However, Bagley served a good supper, and afterwards Barney tried to read in the big salon; but soon he put out the lamps to better watch the lights at St. Florentin.

He went out and wandered about the Rock while Bagley was still clearing up in the dining room and kitchen. Barney came indoors and was trying again to read when he heard a shot in the direction of the shore and, going to the door, he thought he also heard cries. He went ashore and wandered about for nearly

an hour before returning to find the Rock dark and the house shut. After trying to arouse Bagley, he went ashore once more to find that Bagley already had arrived at Wheedon's and was determined to remain there.

He had had "enough" he explained to Barney as he previously had informed Wheedon; that was the extent of the explanation he made. He had brought the keys to Wheedon, and he was going home to Chicago on the earliest train passing in the morning. If Mr. Loutrelle wished, perhaps Wheedon would take him to the Rock to-morrow and let him take out his things; Bagley was "through."

Under the circumstances, Barney saw nothing better to do than also stay at Wheedon's for the night. He thought he saw lights on the Rock after midnight, and so reported to Wheedon, who replied, "Yes, one often saw lights on the Rock, but nobody would be there."

Barney went to sleep but got up early to see Bagley; Barney even went part of the way to the railroad with Bagley, endeavoring to make the man admit what had happened to frighten him off; but Barney got no satisfaction and no further information of any sort. When he figured that the people at St. Florentin would be up, he turned back and called there, asking for Ethel; her grandfather admitted him and took him to the office where he entertained him.

Ethel had ceased to feel excitement; too great agitation this morning had confused and betrayed her; she could see plainly now the mistake she had made.

"I thought all the time that Bagley must be the person you were to meet at the Rock," she said.

"No," Barney said. "If you saw him, you couldn't think of him as a principal at all."

"When Asa told me that Bagley was at Wheedon's — and he didn't know about your going there —"

"I hadn't come there when Asa stopped in."

"No; so, not knowing of anybody else at the Rock, I thought they had killed you. But of course it was some one who arrived at the Rock after Bagley had shut you out and you had followed him to Wheedon's."

"Yes; I think that's pretty clear," Barney agreed. "But who was he?"

"Do you suppose Bagley knows? I mean, do you think Bagley knew that some one else was coming to the Rock last night?"

"Perhaps," Barney considered doubtfully. "It's possible, but when I think over the way Bagley acted, I don't believe it's probable; that is, Bagley is the sort of man who's square to the fellow who pays him; and if he knew that Clarke or some one from Clarke was due at the Rock last night, Bagley would have stuck it out for a few hours longer. I picked him for plain scared, Miss Carew, at the idea of waiting at the Rock with me for something to happen which he didn't know anything about."

"You think that the man who came was Clarke?"

"No; because Bagley was too certain Clarke was still in Europe, and if Clarke was here, he would have taken Bagley more into his confidence."

"Then you think the person who came wasn't even connected with Clarke?"

"Certainly it wouldn't seem so."

"My grandfather knows, of course," Ethel said with amazing, unreal recollection that she was sitting there with a young man, almost a stranger to her, trying to figure out the facts of a crime which her grandfather knew all about. "That telegram from my uncle Lucas

in Chicago, which Asa brought when we were at dinner, probably told about the man. But if he came from Chicago, he was before us; we know no one got off our train but ourselves, and there was no other train from Chicago yesterday. So he would have been about here when we arrived. But there was no stranger about or we'd have heard of it from Sam or Asa or somebody, as we heard about Bagley."

"There was the fellow who slept in the snow in the shack opposite the cabin where we had tea."

"Yes," Ethel said. "And I think my grandfather knew he was about yesterday afternoon. You see, grandfather was disturbed and expecting something yesterday when he called me up at the cabin before he knew you'd come and were going to the Rock. When Sam told us about Bagley, I thought that accounted for grandfather's interest. But I am sure now it was the other man being about. I think Kincheloe was out in the afternoon looking up that man, and I think — I think," she hazarded with the certainty of one of those lucid instants when in the mind a number of confused incidents become clear, "that the telegram from my uncle told my grandfather not so much that the man was here, but who he was and what his presence meant. You see, after that we had prayers and grandfather sent Kincheloe out again, and grandfather waited in his house with his rifle loaded. He wasn't sure whether Kincheloe, or the other man, was coming back from the Rock to his house."

She slid down from the counter upon which she had been sitting. "What are we in, you and I?" she asked, suddenly shivering.

He put his hands steadily upon her arm. "I got you into it," he accused himself. "You know I'd

no idea what it would do to you, or I'd turned back yesterday."

His hold warmed her; she liked him for that grasp, neither too firm nor too weak, nor claiming any unpleasant proprietorship in her because she had gone from her grandfather's house with him. While they had been talking, she knew now that he had been thinking throughout more about the effect of these events upon her than upon himself.

He took his hand from her as soon as she ceased quivering and, turning about to the gray glass of the old store window, he observed, as she had been seeing, that some one was bringing out the sled and team which Sam Green Sky yesterday had driven and was pulling up before her grandfather's house. It appeared to be Sam who was in the seat; he got down and went into the house to reappear quickly, carrying a suit case which he placed on the sled; a woman followed.

"Who's leaving the house?" Barney inquired.

"Mrs. Kincheloe," Ethel said, recognizing Miss Platt's brown muskrat coat. "But I don't think she is going away. I believe that's my suit case which Sam carried. She's bringing it to me; you see, grandfather is sending me off."

She realized that she ought to feel cut off and alone; but she did not. Indeed, she had never felt less lonely in all her life. Up to this moment — it seemed — she had been solitary. When she had had her father, even so long ago as the days on the old ranch when she first inquired of her father why she never saw her mother's people, she had been separated from others by some secret which she was not to be told. The fact that her father knew the secret and would not tell her was in itself something which shut her out from

him. No one ever had been in the same situation as she, in regard to that unknown, all-controlling circumstance, until she met this stranger who had come to her with her father's name, seeking St. Florentin and Resurrection Rock. She could not yet even guess how it might be that he — that little white boy living with the Indians back from the Charlevoix road — had been caught by events which also had ensnared her on the Powder River ranch; it was plain only that they had been caught together.

"You must go, of course," he said; and the sudden dismay which came when he recognized the moment of separation sent a warm, exulting thrill through her. They had come so close together that, wonderfully, they both had been assuming that they were to continue in association; but of course they could not.

"I don't mean I'd have you stay," he said hastily, conscious of the reluctance he had betrayed. "You've done altogether too much for me."

"Not for you!" she denied. "I'd like to do things for you; but I can't have you think you're in debt to me for what I've tried to do. And you're not to feel you got me into this; you — you just came to help me, I feel, in something I was to have to do alone, if you hadn't come."

"The fact is," he rejoined, "that if I hadn't taken it into my head to intrude into affairs up here, you'd be just as usual at your grandfather's house now, with no trouble; or else you'd be on your way back to Wyoming with the money you came for."

"Who put it into your head to intrude? And do you think I'd want his money now if he offered it? — About going; I think I'm glad he's sending me away," she decided. "It's saving me explanations. You see,

I ought to be going this morning; one of us should be in Chicago right now."

She repeated "one of us" again unconsciously, including him with her in the way they both were thinking but which neither had yet quite confessed. She would not have planned to phrase it so; but now that she had, she would not alter it. "We know that Kincheloe — and my grandfather — had somebody killed. But who? We don't know; and I think we'll not find out up here. We can't prove even that any one came to the Rock after you left last night. And if we could, we couldn't show any reason why Kincheloe and my grandfather should make away with him. We know there is a reason, but what — what is it, do you suppose?" she appealed to Barney, her emotions for a moment overcoming her attempt to reason. "What has my grandfather against you and me? Who was it that he dare not let you meet? What — oh, what did my father want to say to you?"

Again that morning had her words, forcing themselves out, told her what she had not yet admitted to herself. Yesterday, and last night, she had refused to accept the substance of that letter from London as an actual experience to be seriously held; but this morning her ideas were deepening.

"I think there's surely something to be found out in Chicago," Barney said. "Bagley's back there; and Marcellus Clarke has his office there."

"And my uncle Lucas is there — or he was when he sent that telegram last night warning grandfather. But of course, he'll be with grandfather; I'll learn nothing from him, if he can help it."

"He's the uncle at whose house you stayed before coming up here?"

"Yes."

"And now you're going back there?"

"Hardly," she said. "Hardly — even if he'd have me."

Barney nodded. "I thought so; I've set you against all your own people, haven't I?"

He was concerned solely with her as he stood gazing at her; but she was finding herself thinking not of her own affairs at all, but wholly of him for the moment. The expression had returned to his eyes which again let her picture him as the thoughtful little boy, — the good-looking, straight-standing boy with the pleasant, wondering gray eyes looking up at the Indian who was telling him puzzling things about himself and showing him the ring — the ring which accorded so remarkably with the salon in the house on the Rock — which Azen Mabo had received with Barney from the Nomad Indian hunter and fisherman, Noah Jo.

"Did you notice the device carved on the mantel in the big room on Resurrection Rock?" she asked Barney suddenly, destroying his thoughts.

"No; why?"

"It reminded me of your ring. Look at it when you go out there."

She saw him start and his hand automatically, at mention of the ring, had gone to his pocket. She saw his fingers feel for the ring as innumerable times before they must have done; and her witnessing of this simple, unconscious habit by which he was accustomed to assure himself that he still held safe his sole chance of connection with his own people sent a pang through her.

"My people," she started to reply to his earlier question, when the sled from her grandfather's house drew up before the store building. Sam Green Sky,

cheerful and chewing, was driving, and Miss Platt was observantly erect beside Ethel's suit case. Sam stopped the horses, and as Miss Platt prepared to get down, Barney asked Ethel:

"What do you want me to tell her?"

"I'll be with her in a minute; let her drive on a little and wait."

When he went out, Ethel wondered if she would have succeeded in making Miss Platt obey these directions; Barney did succeed, quickly and without evident difficulty.

"She asked me to inform you that she had carefully packed all your clothing and other articles," Barney reported, smiling slightly when he returned. "Since you have defied his authority, your grandfather does not require you to return to his house; but as he is responsible for you while here, Mrs. Kincheloe will see you safely aboard the train."

"He doesn't want me to see him again," Ethel said, "or Kincheloe. About my people," she reverted, "they've never been my people — except grandmother. The rest of them — grandfather and my uncles — only pretended to be mine when my father was alive. I've told you my father never had anything to do with them, and you heard grandmother say that my mother broke with grandfather."

"Yes."

"I was thinking a good deal about my mother and my father last night, Mr. Loutrelle. It seems — it seems," she repeated, "that last November, and then a few weeks later, my father tried to send you some message. Why was that, do you suppose? I mean, why didn't he try to send it to me?"

"Were you trying to get a message from him?"

"No; I never thought of it. What's that to do with it?"

"Everything, they say."

"Who?"

"Oh, people like the Adleys who think they know about such matters. You understand, I don't claim to know much myself; but I've often heard them discussing methods of communication with those on 'the other side of the veil.'"

"That's what they call — heaven?"

"Frequently. On that other side — they say — are any number of people, who recently were here and are mightily concerned about us who still are here, and who want to communicate with some of us but can't, because not enough of us do what is necessary to give them a chance."

Ethel quivered. "You think that my father might be one of those, and he perhaps wanted very much to say something to me and could not because I didn't try to reach him?"

"I think," Barney replied, "that the Adleys would say so."

"Then perhaps," Ethel considered out loud, "perhaps he talked to you — or tried to — because you were the only person who was trying to communicate through the veil who would soon see me."

"I thought of something like that myself last night, Miss Carew."

"But how did he know that we were to meet? How?" She drew her shoulders up quickly and walked in the snow upon the floor. "All my life I've known that my father was hiding something he held against my mother's family; and I've known that having to hide it and not to act was terribly, terribly hard for

him. I never knew till an hour ago that my mother was against the others, too. Knowing that, I think that if my mother had lived, she and father would have come to the issue with grandfather, but since she died, father could not. He loved her so and perhaps for my sake he decided he couldn't take action. I wonder if, after he was dead and perhaps saw mother, he learned that she wished justice — justice, whatever that may be — to be done; I wonder if that was what father was trying to tell you for me?"

She stopped walking and stood at the gray window, gazing vacantly at her grandfather's huge house beyond the edge of the deserted village.

"The other side of the veil," she repeated. "I've heard that before, but I never thought much about it. A veil — only a veil, they say, between here and where my father is? Do you believe that, Mr. Lou-trelle? — In that case," she went on, not waiting when he did not immediately answer, "he would know the situation here and what should be done and who would be affected much more definitely than I'd supposed; and he would . . ." She turned about to Barney and checked herself from continuing this speculation. "At any rate, I shall find out what I can about this business and face the consequences. For that reason, I'll not see my grandmother again. I'd like to but maybe, if I saw her, I couldn't go through with this as I must. I'll let him pack me off with Miss Platt. That's best."

She glanced down the road a hundred paces where Miss Platt, with stiff impatience, was sitting waiting on the sled. Ethel knew that Barney would escort her to the sled, but this was her last moment alone with him; and he, also recognizing it, asked:

"Where are you going in Chicago? To be particu-

lar, how are you planning to live? You've let me know your present circumstances; and now you'll not be going to your uncle's."

"No; but there are any number of places for a girl in Chicago."

"You've money?"

"Oh, yes."

"How much?" he demanded unequivocally.

"With me about thirty-five dollars."

"That'll take you to Chicago."

"And more, too. I've my return mileage."

"That's good; now beyond the thirty-five dollars, have you more in a bank?"

"No," she confessed, flushing a little.

"I've about a hundred and twenty dollars," he informed her, putting a hand in a pocket. "Will you take a hundred?"

"No," she said uncomfortably. "Of course not."

"Why not?"

"I can't take money from"—she halted.

"Me? Then there's some one else you prefer to have —"

"No," she denied quickly. "No. I've friends, of course; but I can look out for myself, surely."

"Have you ever supported yourself?"

"No; but —"

"I've always made my living, and besides I'm the one to carry the expenses of our"—he hesitated over describing their compact and then said—"investigations."

"But I don't need money now."

He refrained from overurging and withdrew his hand from his pocket. "You'll let me know, by wire, where you'll stop?"

"Yes," she promised.

"Likely enough I'll follow you to Chicago before long; for either I'll find out something soon, or I'll know there's nothing more to be had here."

"How'll I address you?" she asked.

"Just care of Quesnel; I'll keep in touch with the telegraph station and the mail."

"Where'll you stay?"

He considered. "I don't know. Maybe at Wheedon's; perhaps at the Rock. I'll go there right away, of course. I may decide to stay. What do you know about Wheedon?"

"Not much more than you can judge. Marcellus Clarke paid him for what he did; it's possible, if grandfather wanted something different done, he might pay more."

"And Wheedon would do it?"

"He'd do — or omit doing — small things, I think."

"I believe I can make out Redbird; he's enough like Azen Mabo; if he believes that we're right, we can count on him."

"He believes," Ethel said, "that some one was killed at the Rock last night and that my grandfather was at the bottom of it."

They had completed the telling to each other of what each ought to know; but she had not suspected how unwilling she was to abandon her new friend whom she had regained this morning as from the dead. She did not fear that she was leaving him in danger of his life; she was conscious that whatever was the purpose which yesterday had controlled her grandfather, it had been accomplished,—for the time, at least. Barney might encounter danger in pursuing the event

of last night; but now he fully understood its source and nature and would be prepared.

She gave him her hand in good-by and, when he took it, the clasp surprised both of them with its restoration of the passion of the moment when she had gone to him and put her hand upon him before her grandfather.

"I'd like to feel that you do not ask me to forget that," he said, not describing it, so wholly was it in their pulses. "Do you?"

"No," she said, scarcely audibly; and then firmly, "No."

"I can't stay here unless I'll know where you'll be and how you're doing, Miss Carew," he said, releasing her. "So even if you have nothing particular to report, you'll let me know about yourself."

"Yes," she promised, "if you do the same."

"I will." He opened the door and, escorting her to the sled, gave her over to Miss Platt's keeping. Sam chirruped up his horses.

"Not so cold as yesterday," Miss Platt offered impersonal conversation.

"Not nearly," Ethel agreed.

"Had you breakfast anywhere? Mr. Cullen feared not; so he had a basket packed for you. Would you like something now?"

"I'll take it for later on," Ethel said.

What a marvellous woman was Miss Platt, Ethel thought. Last night her husband had killed some one; and outwardly Miss Platt was as unruffled as ever, as meticulous about the details of her attire and the arrangement of her lusterless hair. Miss Platt undoubtedly had eaten precisely her usual breakfast that morning. Ethel was sure that Miss Platt had slept, too, as soon as she and her husband had finished dis-

cussion of the event at the Rock. She surely was remarkably equipped to be in the confidence of a man like Lucas Cullen.

She made Ethel think of him, at moments, not as her grandfather but impersonally as the old, dominating, wilful, violent and sly man who to many millions of people was the embodiment of disregard of others. Lucas Cullen that morning had thought of Ethel impersonally; she had put herself against him, accusing him; therefore she was to be crushed in the way he thought best. Barney Loutrelle too was to be crushed, if what had been done last night was not enough to eliminate him from Lucas Cullen's schemes. But what was that which was done last night? To whom was it done? And why?

The precise, imperturbable person seated beside Ethel and calmly conversing undoubtedly knew; but nothing could make her tell. Ethel felt a mad impulse to seize her and shake her, with the wild idea of shaking the knowledge out of that prim, stiffly poised head. But of course Ethel Carew continued to sit quietly beside Mrs. Merrill Kincheloe while Sam Green Sky obeyed the orders of Lucas Cullen and drove them to the railroad.

Ethel took refuge in thoughts of her friend — the "one of us" who was staying here. He did not want to feel that she wished him to forget their meeting that morning; she did not want to forget it and how he had held to her and understood and asked no advantage but the right to remember.

Her thoughts flew, then, to her father; and she found that, without having been conscious of further reasoning, she was more fully accepting the conjecture she had hazarded about him. Her father had wished to

she had not been able to speak with Barney Loutrelle because her father had known that they were to meet; Barney was her only friend then attempting to speak through the veil; and her father wished her to proceed with that which, in his life, he had avoided. Thus, replying now and then to Miss Platt's observations about the snow, the forest and general, current topics, she went on to take the first train to Chicago.

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CHAPTER IX

COUSIN AGNES

WHEN lake people have occasion to voyage from the Straits of Mackinac to the great city which lies near the southern end of Lake Michigan, they say they are going "up" to Chicago. Their custom of thought is contrary to the habit of ordinary travelers by railroad who consider that they are journeying "up" when headed north and "down" when speeding south; for the instinct of the lake people is to follow the course of water as it flows and, since Lake Michigan empties through the Straits into Huron, obviously Chicago is "up lake" from Mackinac.

Railroaders and those new settlers coming into the countries served chiefly by the roads are beginning to break down the old way of thinking and speaking; but railroads in the peninsulas are affairs of the last generation and a half; men are still hearty and strong who drove the old stages into Traverse upon the State "roads" slashed through primeval forests of the white and the Norway pine, the tamarack, spruce and balsam when the earliest predecessor of the Père Marquette had stretched its steel only to White Cloud, and when the right of way upon which the G. R. and I. now operates had its northern end at Big Rapids. And in the upper peninsula it was 1885 when the first locomotive thrust its pilot toward the waters of St. Mary's River. During the decades which are clearly in the

remembrance of Charlevoix and Emmet County men and women, the whole world was shut in when winter froze over the Straits, stretched its ice-sheet across Grand Traverse Bay and Little Traverse and out to Beaver Island; for the ships, then, were laid up; and, if spring were late and the pioneers in the forest ran out of supplies before the lakes "opened" again, men packed provisions to one another on their backs, following on snowshoes the blazed trails to Traverse and Petoskey. Now, though the railroads run from the Soo to Chicago and from Grand Rapids to Mackinaw City during the twelvemonth, the "closing" and "opening" of the lakes in the fall and spring still tremendously influence the people of the peninsulas; for their chosen ways yet are upon the water.

Ethel Carew, granddaughter of Lucas Cullen — lumberman, mine owner and, in his day, possessor of his string of ships — always was, in her mind, one of the lake people who went from the Straits "up" to Chicago. For old Lucas consciously had taught her, when she was a child at St. Florentin, to think of the city only as an upstream settlement lying at the top of a lake and river system whose mouth is the Gulf of St. Lawrence, but whose center is — not Chicago — but the Straits. The impulse to impart this teaching arose, in Lucas, somewhat from local pride in the tradition which endowed his home with history going back two hundred and fifty years to the time when the first men from France, following the ancient water trails of the Indians, canoed to Michillimackinac and founded at the Straits the settlement which was the center for all western civilization of that time. Chicago was then — Lucas liked to say — only a swamp for Pottowatomies.

But his motive in this teaching was not all pride in the neighborhood of his St. Florentin; nor was his attitude to be explained by considering it the natural, invidious contempt of the city on the part of the for-ester, the miner and the shipman. Lucas's rancor against Chicago was far more personal and was stirred by the fact that though Lucas once had moved to Chicago and for a long period spoke of himself as "of Chicago" when conversing with strangers, yet Chicagoans never had considered him one of them in the manner that they deemed his brother John a Chicagoan. Lucas claimed, indeed, that he had never desired them to; he had come to the city simply to please his children, and he loudly scorned the social preferment which his brother and his brother's wife and their son Oliver, the "damn weakling", had won.

To tell the whole truth, Lucas himself had for a short time gone into the race for social preferment; and occasionally he admitted it by boasting of his results; for if the gains for himself were negligible, his energies and expenditures certainly succeeded in acquiring for his children much of that which he coveted. In the marriage of his elder daughter to a nobleman of France, had he not indisputable proof that when he undertook to play the social "racket" he had proved himself far more capable than John? For John's only child, Oliver, had married whom? A stenographer. No one of Lucas's four children had done as badly as that.

Lucas habitually terminated his reference to his nephew's wife with a statement of her position in the world when Oliver married her; her later position accorded less perfectly with Lucas's fine talk about the superiority of his branch of the family. For though

young Lucas and Myra, his wife, and John and his wife all became well known, they never altogether gained the honorable prominence which Oliver's wife won; and this fact was borne in upon Lucas never more aggravatingly than at the time of the torpedoing of the *Gallantic* in September of the year just past. For Lucas II and Oliver's wife both were aboard; when the first reports of the disaster reached the city with the list of Chicagoans unaccounted for, there had been as much doubt of the safety of Lucas II as of the fate of Oliver's wife; yet every newspaper in the city displayed in tremendous headlines the fear that Mrs. Oliver Cullen was lost, relegating the interest in Lucas to secondary place.

To old Lucas, this had seemed insulting, disgraceful. "Mrs. Oliver Cullen Among the Lost," he reread the black type contemptuously. "Mrs. Oliver Cullen — Cullen," he repeated grudging her his surname. "As if people cared what happened to that woman."

But people did care; many, many of them. Ethel had cared for cousin Agnes, though there was no blood bond between them, far more than for any one else whom she saw in Chicago. Indeed, cousin Agnes's personality was so predominant in Ethel's mind that when she thought of Chicago she had always thought first of cousin Agnes, of seeing her again and talking with her, and learning of the absorbing and vital new activities in which cousin Agnes would be engaged. For cousin Agnes was always absorbed in work and somehow, without dropping the tasks which had enlisted her, she continually was taking on new duties.

She had first come to Chicago when she was a girl, — so she always told those who asked her. Previously she had lived in a small town, she said; and no one —

not even a newspaper interviewer — got much further on that point. The recorded year of her arrival in Chicago was 1897; her name had been Agnes Dehan; and she started her business career in the position of a stenographer, as Lucas Cullen repeatedly recalled. She found employment first with a tobacco firm on Wabash Avenue near the river; then she applied for and was given a position in the office of John Cullen on Dearborn Street. There Oliver met her and immediately fell in love with her.

Oliver had always kept a photograph of her as she was at that time,— a girl of medium height, well proportioned but thin. She was never meant to be so slender as she was; her frame was expressive of too great vigor for so little flesh. One knew, in gazing upon her picture, that she needed filling out and, when filled out, would be a beautiful and forceful woman. It was plain that, not long before her employment in the Cullen offices, she had passed through some extraordinary experience which had tremendously sapped her vitality. Not only her thinness betrayed this but also the expression of her lips and the look in her eyes. She had endured some frightful ordeal which temporarily had downed her but had not beaten her; it haunted her, but she was to overcome it; that was what her lips and her eyes silently said.

Many men offered themselves, after their various ways, to take up her battle for her,— men from her own station in life, men from situations usually considered below hers and from places deemed decidedly higher. But only Oliver Cullen, after his fifth or sixth attempt, succeeded in offering himself aright.

This was in '99, after John Cullen had dismissed Agnes Dehan, not for any fault in her work, but be-

cause she was too attractive to his son. She had been working elsewhere on Dearborn Street for more than a year; her figure had begun to fill out; she had regained strength and was beginning to exhibit the remarkable vigor of body and of mind and of will which so soon afterwards characterized the woman known to the city as Mrs. Oliver Cullen. She had become beautiful indeed with the beauty which made one feel the deepness and dignity of her thought and her character at the same time that her physical contours of feature, of arm and bosom and limb had become pleasing. Even at the time of her marriage when she was still a girl, no one would have described her as merely pretty. She had wonderful hair, chestnut in color, and she had distinct, dark brows — yes, too heavy, perhaps, if they had been above eyes which were only likeable and pretty. But Agnes Cullen's blue eyes required such brows. The lines were gone from about her lips which smiled seldom, indeed, but pleasantly when they did smile and never meaninglessly.

"That girl is unaccountable," friends of the Cullens said upon meeting her. "She is going to do something before she dies. What in the world do you suppose she wants with Oliver?"

"His money, of course," so the obvious and the stupid said.

But the truth was that, if she had wished only money, she might have married a richer man sooner; and the wise ones, if they had not discovered this fact, at least could have suspected it. "She'll make something surprising of Oliver," they said, which implied that so far — in the estimation of his own people — Oliver had made nothing surprising of himself.

His health, of course, was partly responsible; for

Oliver had been born "delicate" and, by maternal anxiety and coddling, had been kept so.

"I don't dare have other children after my experience with Oliver," his mother confided to her intimates. "Besides, I must devote my life to him." And, as it proved that she had twenty years of life left to devote, Oliver was almost of age before he escaped the régime of doctor's diets, prescribed physical exercises and private tutors which altogether had fixed firmly in his consciousness that he was not, and never could be, as other men.

Frequently during Oliver's youth, when his father and his uncle were on speaking terms, Lucas jeered at John for the folly of Oliver's upbringing and boasted the perfect health of his own sons under more rigorous ideas of rearing. But John lived in the terror which only a strong man, who had acquired much, can feel for the safety of his only son and heir; and his wife, too, had worked her dreads upon him.

"Yes, your way seems good for your boys," John would concede to Lucas. "But we have to be careful with Oliver, or we won't have him at all."

So, after a while, Lucas ceased to advise. If John wanted his boy a damned weakling, that was John's business, and all the more would go to Lucas and his sons. Thus Oliver continued to diet and exercise and study for an established number of hours a day in his rooms on the third floor of the prim, fashionable city home on Scott Street; upon fair afternoons, at appointed times, a riding master might appear, and Oliver would trot, in perfect form and upon a most thoroughly broken and trustworthy horse, around the corner to the Drive and up the bridle paths beside the lake to Lincoln Park. When the season came for his

mother's voyages to Europe, Oliver accompanied her. Indeed, she proclaimed that many of her stays at Spa, Marienbad and Biarritz were necessary for Oliver's sake. Her son went to Japan and then around the world with her; but not until the September following her death did Oliver ever undertake an overnight journey alone. Then he ventured from Chicago to Boston to enter Harvard University.

This was wholly his own idea and entered upon of his own initiative. He purposed to make himself, as quickly as possible, like his cousins and the young men they knew, but his pride prevented him from following them to their chosen college. His determination was good; but he started a little late, and Harvard was very big and tolerant. Yale, where his cousins were, or a much smaller college might better have brought him into association with young men of the types he needed to know. There were plenty of them at Cambridge; but there were many of the milder, more timid men, too, studious, serious, interesting to Oliver and friendly. These welcomed Oliver and made him one of them; and so, though he steadfastly tried to row in one of the graded eights at Weld Boat Club, though he offered himself to track coaches and begged them to try him out mercilessly; though he even ventured — without any football experience whatever — to come out and be pummelled on the scrub elevens, the men whom he sought did not seek him. His cousins Lucas and John despised the mild friends he made almost as much as they despised him. When they came to Cambridge with the Yale teams, they introduced Oliver, condescendingly, to Harvard men who had been his neighbors in the dormitories for two years.

Lucas and John were members of good junior so-

cieties in New Haven; and it was their Harvard friends, they boasted, who finally put Oliver into the "Pud."

They never gave Oliver credit himself for catching on at last, though he actually had a part in a Hasty Pudding Play and got on the staff of the *Lampoon*. He was graduated "*summa cum laude*" and with Phi Beta Kappa, too; so he was offered a fellowship to return to the University next year as graduate instructor. The pay, of course, was ridiculous; but Oliver was independent of salary and delighted that he was wanted for himself. So he returned and instructed, and he dreamt happily of the day when he would work up to head of his Department and he would present to the university a new lecture hall, named after his old professor, and Oliver Cullen would hold classes in the big theater in which two or three hundred boys would gather, calling him affectionate nicknames among themselves and clapping when he came into the room.

His father despairingly attempted to turn Oliver from such ambitions; but his uncle Lucas laughed. Life insurance companies were beginning to ask reëxamination of John's "risk"; and Lucas's sons were out of college and demanding quite a place in the business. If Oliver liked to live like a highbrow on a few thousand a year, let him; he probably would never marry, and if he did, it would be to some Beacon Hill dowd who would keep him anchored in Boston far from interference with the Cullen western offices.

So everything was steering directly toward Lucas when Agnes Dehan put in her oar. Before she married Oliver, she made certain stipulations not communicated to others but which soon appeared in effect. The first evidently was that Oliver take her to Eng-

land where she managed, by using the Cullen acquaintance and influence in a manner no other Cullen had ever dared, to gain a presentation at Court, and where she made an excellent impression. Shortly afterwards Oliver and she were entertained in English country places; they visited Egypt and India in company with English people of such distinguished standing that when Agnes returned to Chicago the women who previously would have snubbed her unmercifully — if she had been stupid enough to have given them a chance — fell over one another to receive her. But immediately after her return, she made it plain that she had broader plans than a mere social career.

Oliver entered the business; and the antagonism between his father and his uncle, which had more or less lapsed during John's failing health and Oliver's indifference, blazed up hotter than ever. John died and "the damned weakling" and his upstart wife, who had been a stenographer, claimed from Lucas and his stronger, far more able sons, the control of the Cullen corporations which ownership of old John's stock implied.

Lucas fought and blustered; but Oliver asserted the control; or, rather, Agnes did. For Lucas and his sons did not remain long in doubt regarding the force with which they had to deal; nor did outsiders remain ignorant. Mrs. Oliver Cullen, they thought, would have preferred to have her husband in control; but, having seen him try to exercise power, she held no dangerous illusions and took charge herself.

Oliver — whose youthful frailty developed into actual lesions before he was forty — fainted on a July day when he was walking in the sun; upon his recovery, he summoned his lawyer and transferred to Agnes title

to all his holdings of every sort; so nominally, as well as actually, she governed stockholders' and directors' meetings and, whenever she cared to, outvoted and humiliated Lucas and his sons. If they did not like her control of family affairs, they had the right to buy her out or they could sell out to her. But they could not buy her out; and they knew the value of their own holdings too well to sell. So they grinned, as best they could, and bore it while they watched Oliver gradually sink into invalidism and year follow year with Agnes childless.

There was an old contract, which Lucas senior had safely locked away in a bank vault and which he inspected from time to time, by which he and his brother had bound themselves — for mutual and perfectly legal compensation in hand and hereby acknowledged — that in the event of either of them or their sons dying without issue, the holdings of the deceased would pass to the survivor. Lucas had hired most capable advice to the effect that, under certain conditions of survivorship, that contract would be enforceable to-day; and at last in the month of September, in the year of our Lord, 1918, those conditions seemed completely fulfilled: for Agnes, who had gone heart and soul into war work and had safely crossed six times through the submarine zone, finally sailed aboard a ship which was torpedoed; and she was lost.

The date of the sinking of the *Gallentic* was the seventeenth; upon that day Oliver was alive, though in poor health, at his home in Chicago. The news reached him on the eighteenth; on the twentieth he gave up hope for his wife; and on the twenty-second, he died. Now since Agnes, having been thoroughly businesslike, had not taken title to Oliver's possessions

without legally providing that all return to him in the event of her death prior to his, Oliver must have been in possession after the seventeenth of September and until the twenty-second, after which date all was Lucas's.

But Agnes, as though to torment Lucas even after her death, had passed on in the most annoying way possible. Though it was obvious that she had drowned, yet no one actually had seen her drown; no one had witnessed at the time of the torpedoing — as the courts required — the infliction of injuries sufficient to cause her death; her body was not found. Hence the courts, though not questioning the validity of Lucas's contract if Agnes' death were known, yet required that a certain protracted period of time pass before the presumption of her death could become legally established. Time, before Lucas could take over her properties! Months and years when Lucas already was past threescore and ten! No wonder he swore whenever he thought of her.

Since she was not legally dead, her home remained open. It had been her habit to supply Mrs. Wain, her housekeeper, with funds for all household expenses for a year ahead; Agnes had done this just before leaving Chicago for her last trip to France; so Mrs. Wain and her servants were at the house, which they were keeping in order as though Mrs. Oliver Cullen were away merely on a visit.

CHAPTER X

A LETTER FROM LONDON

ETHEL had known all about Mrs. Cullen; but when she had been talking with Barney in the old store building at St. Florentin, she had not thought of her cousin's home as a possible place to stay when in Chicago. On the train, however, that occurred to her as the simplest and most logical solution of her lodging problem. She had seldom visited on Scott Street because of the complications involved in going about with her cousins, Bennet and Julia, when staying with cousin Agnes; but now she could be careless of whatever additional difficulties this might cause with her uncles; by her act at St. Florentin, she had definitely and finally come out against them and against their father, her grandfather; she had aligned herself with her own father and — as she now knew — with her own mother and with cousin Oliver and cousin Agnes.

Of course, all of these were gone. It struck her as solemn and strange to be, with Barney Loutrelle, the sole living deputy for so many of her people who were dead. She had thought of them as a young girl without unusually critical doubts or orthodox church creeds thinks of her dead; that is, she considered their souls as departed to a realm so distant and distinct from earth and so sublime in its occupations as to end forever their personal anxiety over earthly affairs; but her experience since meeting Barney Loutrelle had

steadily been leading her to thoughts which, in some half affrightening and yet half solacing way, brought the spirits of her dead in closer relation to her. It was a comfort again to think of herself as possibly doing something to satisfy her father who had kissed her good-by but yesterday — it sometimes seemed — before he went off to the battlefield upon which he had died.

Her first business, after arrival in Chicago, was to look up Marcellus Clarke; so as it was after nine in the morning when she reached the terminal, she went directly from the station to the Monroe Street block where she found that Clarke and Considine had a suite upon an upper floor.

The girl in the waiting room informed her that Mr. Marcellus Clarke was away from the city and the office did not know even where he was at present, though they had last heard from him in Paris; he might have gone to England or he might have had occasion to start for Russia. During his absence Mr. Considine was seeing people who asked for Mr. Clarke. But Mr. Considine, who proved to be a sharp, inquisitive attorney of about forty, much preferred to ask Ethel questions than to answer hers. He stated that, while Mr. Clarke had turned over most of his business to him, yet he was aware that Mr. Clarke had handled certain transactions which had not been entrusted to Considine. He claimed not to know even the name of the client of Mr. Clarke's who owned Resurrection Rock; he was aware that Mr. Clarke paid the taxes and saw to the care of the place.

"But the matter was absolutely confidential with Mr. Clarke, Miss Carew; absolutely." And as Considine himself showed considerable eagerness to learn

from Ethel more about that confidential matter, she believed he did not know much.

No one in the office recalled Bagley. Considine said that if Bagley recently had acted upon instructions from Mr. Clarke, Bagley must have received them directly from Clarke. And this was what Bagley had said. However, investigation of the vouchers which had been paid through the office disclosed the fact that at different times in the past, Mr. Clarke had sent drafts to a D. A. Bagley. The man appeared to have several addresses. After much hesitation and additional questioning of Ethel, Considine supplied her with the last three places where letters had been mailed to Bagley.

Ethel called at them to discover the first to be a rooming house on North Lasalle Street, the proprietor of which vaguely recalled that a man named something like Bagley had stopped there between jobs about a year ago; the other numbers were of homes, one upon Drexel Boulevard and the other upon Sheridan Road, at which Bagley had served for a few months as butler. Ethel telephoned to Considine and reported to him the lack of result from her visits; he said he had no other suggestions to offer, but if Bagley communicated with the office, Considine agreed to inform her. She put an advertisement in the newspapers asking for information about D. A. Bagley, who recently had come from the upper peninsula; then she took a car again to the north side and, leaving it at Division she walked, carrying her suit case, into the district of those who are not dependent upon street cars, where is Scott Street.

It was midafternoon and she was tired and hungry after the too hasty and scanty luncheon she had taken

at one of the Madison Street cafeterias. The excitement of the inquiry for Marcellus Clarke and then the search for Bagley had worn to baffled disappointment, and she was suffering a reaction from the unnatural stimulation of the occurrences at St. Florentin. She was feeling lonely, too; for, in spite of herself, it seemed strange not to be going to see her uncles and her aunts, to become again a close companion to her cousins, Julia and Bennet, who always took her about with them when she was in Chicago.

The cold snap which had ushered in the first week of the year had moderated to temperatures above freezing, and she found Astor Street quite cleared of snow; but a block farther east, the parkway beyond the Lake Shore Drive still was white with drift, and the lake was full of floe ice, glistening and billowing with the movement of the water. She halted, wearily, and half shut her eyes as she gazed toward the lake; she saw no longer the neighboring houses but only the ice and the water and she felt only the fresh wind which blew from the floes; it let her dream, for a moment, that the water before her was Huron and that she was on the beach near St. Florentin and that Barney might appear and she would hear his voice:

"Ah, j'y étais mousquetaire!"

She started at actually hearing a young man's voice calling her name: "Why, hello, Ethel Carew!"

Looking about, she discovered that a town car had stopped at the curb; the chauffeur remained in his seat, but a young man had got out and hailed her.

"Hello, Ira," she returned, recognizing one of Bennet's friends whom she liked and who often took her to dances and dinners.

He did not know her quite well enough to demand why she was walking up Astor Street carrying her baggage and why she was so tired and listless, but he did insist upon her entering his car and persuading him to take her to her uncle's. When she told him that she was not going to the outer drive but to the Oliver Cullen home on Scott Street, he scrutinized her in astonishment.

"Why?" he inquired. "Is any one there?"

"No; just the housekeeper and servants, I believe," she said. He politely restrained further questions and drove her to the door. He went up the steps with her, while his man carried her suit case; but she waited until they were gone before she pressed the bell and a manservant admitted her to the house which had been her cousin's.

"No word from Mrs. Cullen, Godfrey?" she asked.

"No, Miss Carew."

Ethel had not expected word; but she knew that the housekeeper had never given up hope of Mrs. Oliver Cullen's return.

"Just tell Mrs. Wain I'm here."

"Certainly, Miss Carew. I am to take this upstairs?"

She nodded, and the man disappeared with her baggage. She sat down uneasily in the drawing-room. Even the servant had been astonished at her coming to visit at this house; and Ethel knew that her friend Ira undoubtedly would soon mention to Bennet, or else inform some one who would tell Bennet or Julia, that she had come back to town and gone to the home which had been Oliver's. She was regretting not having followed the plan, which she had discussed with Barney, of taking a room in quite a separate section of the

city, when Mrs. Wain came briskly downstairs and welcomed her.

"It is so nice of you to come here, Miss Ethel. Mrs. Cullen will be so pleased when she hears of it." Mrs. Wain always spoke as though Agnes was certain to return. "I was wondering yesterday if this might mean you were soon to arrive, though I would have forwarded it, if I had known where to send it."

"This" was a letter which the housekeeper was offering — a square, firm, well-filled envelope with British stamps and with the British strip, "Opened by the Censor." The address was written in bold, vigorous handwriting which Ethel observed with a start; for she knew that writing, though she could not immediately place it. The address was to herself at this number on Scott Street; the postmark was London of a date two weeks earlier; it had arrived in Chicago yesterday afternoon and therefore had been awaiting Ethel about twenty-four hours.

She could not recall when she previously had received mail at cousin Agnes's address; certainly she had not anticipated visiting here again until she made her decision upon the train. Who could have known, in London fourteen days ago, that a letter addressed to Scott Street would catch her?

Her agitation was not lessened by her recollection of the handwriting as she tore open the envelope. This was from Barney's friend of the Canadian battalion who had written Barney of her father's attempt to speak to him, who had told Barney to hasten to Resurrection Rock and had foretold that he would find some one named Bagley and another person named Carew there. The letter read:

My dear Ethel Carew:

I am addressing you without the usual prefix of Miss or Mrs. because I do not know which to use. If you who receive this happen to be Ethel Carew and you had a relative named Philip Carew, who recently died, I believe that the material which has come to me for transmission to you is of considerable concern.

As I must be wholly unknown to you, except for one chance by which you may have heard of me, I should explain something about myself. I am a man twenty-six years of age, recently an officer in the Canadian army and previously engaged in the grain business in Edmonton, Alberta. Except for wounds received in Flanders, one of which resulted in the loss of an arm, I am and have been in excellent health. I am considered perfectly normal and, indeed, have been thought thoroughly "practical"; certainly I have never been accused of being visionary or queer in any way. This explanation seems to me useful because, as you may have guessed, I am writing you to report the substance of a communication meant for you and which was received from a person who is dead.

Since I am entirely ignorant of your attitude toward this tremendous subject and of your information in regard to it, I can assume only that you are aware that many persons, in England and in other countries, are now engaged in communicating with persons who have passed from our state of bodily being; and probably you at least have heard that many of those who have passed on are likewise attempting to communicate with us here.

The attempts made by those on both sides are admittedly imperfect; there remain many obstacles the nature of which we do not understand; but I am one of those who, after first scoffing, have undergone experiences which have completely convinced me that at certain times, and under particular conditions, we may

communicate with individuals whose bodies no longer live and that, at certain times and upon special occasions, various individuals from among the dead have transmitted messages to us.

Of course I cannot describe to you details of the method of transmission; but I should say that, at present, communications seldom occur without some one on this side seeking and establishing a suitable condition of receptivity. It has frequently appeared that individuals on the other side have wished to communicate with persons on this but have been unable to on account of lack of facility; for very often when one of us is sitting with a medium for the sake of reaching a friend on the other side, the sitter discovers that another person from the departed — perhaps absolutely unknown to him — takes occasion to employ the medium for the transmission of messages to some one else. In this way I learned your name and that of Philip Carew, whom I assume to be some one related to you, and who is dead.

Early in November, I was present at a private sitting, together with three other persons, with a Mrs. Brand, a lady endowed with very marked psychic powers but not a professional medium in the sense that she receives remuneration for her work. After a series of communications of personal interest and significance to myself and to the other sitters, the "control" abruptly began speaking for one who gave his name as Philip Carew and who was unknown both to myself and to the others present.

This Philip Carew made known that he desired to communicate with a Barney Loutrelle; and I knew well a man of that name. I replied to that effect and said that I would inform Loutrelle at once. This response seemed to satisfy Philip Carew; the "control" resumed speaking for individuals known to us, and who appeared to have given way to Philip Carew for

the moment, and nothing more happened at that time.

Immediately upon leaving the sitting, I wrote to my friend Barney Loutrelle, who was then with his battalion in France, and informed him of the incident. He acknowledged receipt of my letter, but I believe he was able to do nothing about the matter; and nothing more occurred, to my knowledge, until December 10th, when at another and similar sitting with Mrs. Brand, the "control" again suddenly broke off speaking for individuals known to the sitters and again spoke for Philip Carew, saying that Philip Carew was extremely anxious to speak to Barney Loutrelle.

I replied, relating what I had done and stating my belief that, under the conditions at the front, Barney Loutrelle had been unable to find means to communicate. Philip Carew then said that I should give him a message which was for him to go at once to a place called St. Florentin and find something there which seemed to be called Resurrection.

Conditions for communication happened just then to be poor. If you know about psychic matters, you'll understand how that may be; but though it was hard to clearly comprehend what the "control" was endeavoring to transmit for Philip Carew, it was plain that Philip Carew was no end earnest about the business. He repeated again and again that it was most imperative and Barney must go at once. When I asked where St. Florentin was, he said in Northern Michigan near the Straits, and that Bagley would be there and Carew — not himself, he meant; but another. Barney was to say he was "Dick" and "take things over"; but he was to "look out!" I could not learn what he was to look out for, as Philip Carew soon was gone; but the unusual emphasis impressed me so that I wrote and wired Barney urging him to start at once; and he wired me that he started.

Now if he found St. Florentin and if you are the Carew who was to be there, and if you were there, you know all this and more, perhaps. I heard nothing more until this afternoon, when again sitting with Mrs. Brand — I've had a couple of sittings between when nothing at all occurred in regard to this — Philip Carew once more was present and wished to speak. Perhaps because it was earlier in the sitting and the medium was not tired, I received several perfectly clear and coherent messages. What I had done in regard to Barney Loutrelle was wrong. When I asked how wrong, I received the reply, "Not so much wrong as incomplete."

I then asked what I should do to make it complete; and I got the reply:

"It is no use, really, at all. Earlier it seemed so; but not now. It is no use without Quinlan."

This name was repeated clearly so many times that I feel certain I have it right, though names are often most confused and difficult to obtain correctly. "Quinlan knows," the control said again and again. "She must see him first."

When I asked for Quinlan's whole name and address and who "she" was, I got the reply, somewhat impatiently, "James, of course: James Quinlan, Chicago." And he said that "she" was Ethel Carew and requested me to write her at once all about it. I will quote this verbatim since, though it was meaningless to me, it was clearly most important:

"See Quinlan and tell him not only I but Robert, who is here beside me, says to do it. That is the only way, and he will be happy when it is over. It must be done. Tell him the cost there is nothing."

Then I received, quite clearly, your address as I have written it upon this envelope, and the sitting ended.

It seemed my duty to write this to you. Of course

I hope it has meaning and in some way will be of service to you. If it is meaningless, please credit me at least with fair intentions.

Very sincerely,

HUSTON ADLEY.

There followed his address in London.

The same circumstance continued to affect Ethel most both when she read through this letter in the drawing-room while Mrs. Wain waited and looked on, and when she reread it alone in the room which was to be hers; this circumstance was that fourteen days ago some one in London had known that she would receive a letter addressed to this house when she had not the remotest thought of visiting Scott Street. This incident, small in itself, endowed all the contents of the letter with an authority difficult to deny; moreover, she had learned that the contents of other letters written by Huston Adley and reporting information received by him at "sittings" had proved extraordinarily important. So she delayed little before endeavoring to follow the wishes of "Philip Carew."

She had a city telephone directory brought to her, and she investigated its lists to discover that there were seven James Quinlans in Chicago, besides two in the suburbs and a number of Quinlans with the initial J. which might stand for James. She was aware that the telephone book listed but a few hundred thousand out of the millions of people in Chicago, so probably there were ten or twenty other J. Quinlans who lived in the city but were without telephones. She wondered how she could best discover which was the Quinlan who "knew" that all-important fact which "Philip Carew" and "Robert" wanted him to tell. The fact

had to do, apparently, with Barney and with her grandfather and with Resurrection Rock, for evidently Barney's errand to the Rock was the "it" which was now of no use at all. Certainly Barney's visit to the Rock had not proved of much "use."

Her thought returned to an earlier paragraph of the letter. "It has frequently appeared," Houston Adley said, "that individuals on the other side have wished to communicate with persons on this but have been unable to on account of lack of facility." There seemed a certain rebuke to her in that; her father, after his death, had desired to speak to her but could not because she had not even sought for the necessary condition of receptivity; so her father had had to send her a message indirectly, through a stranger who was more receptive. The image given her in the letter was of her father's spirit standing by other spirits whose loved ones sought them; and her father had had to ask their leave to interrupt to send her a message.

But how could she have known that she should have made attempt to speak with him? Why, she had never, until a few days ago, thought of communication with those in heaven as really possible! Such an idea had not seriously entered her mind; when people, even those closest to you, were dead, they were gone from you forever, she had thought, until in some strange, vague eternity you went to join them — perhaps; Ethel had not been wholly convinced even of that.

She had been baptized in the Episcopal Church when she was an infant; she had gone to Sunday school, faithfully enough, and later to church; she had liked the services, and it seemed on the whole a good thing to do; but the literal beliefs of Christianity had never really become a part of her. They were beautiful, she

thought, but they did not correspond to what was reasonable and modern: many were only legendary or meant to be taken figuratively. She thought of Christ's miracles as figurative, when she thought about them at all; and, though every time she went to church and repeated the Creed she spoke her belief in the resurrection, she had not truly believed in it. She had thought that many of the apostles and others might honestly have believed that they saw Christ after he was dead; but they had done it subjectively as the ultra-modern school of psychology was teaching. To think of a person as actually surviving death in his own personality seemed to Ethel to be believing in ghosts; and no one, of sound mind and nerves, believed in ghosts; they always proved, when thoroughly investigated, to be something quite simple and silly.

Her father's death had not changed this thought but had only served to make her want to believe more firmly in heaven and to think of him as there. But she did not analyze how she came first by the ideas which pictured heaven for her. She just thought of it, naturally, in bright colors of blue and gold and white as the old Sunday-school cards always showed it and as it was described in the hymns which she sang:

Jerusalem, the golden!
With milk and honey blest . . .
What joys await us there!
What radiance of glory!
What bliss beyond compare!

They stand, those halls of Zion,
All jubilant with song,
And bright with many an angel,
And all the martyr throng.

RESURRECTION ROCK

The Prince is ever in them,
The daylight is serene;
The pastures of the blessed
Are decked in glorious sheen.

There is the throne of David;
And there, from care released,
The shout of them that triumph,
The song of them that feast.
And they, who with their Leader,
Have conquered in the fight,
Forever and forever,
Are clad in robes of white.

That was the only way she had at all definitely imagined heaven. And who, believing that — if one's father were anywhere, he was there — would assume to communicate with him in such a realm as that and try to bring back care to him so happily released from care?

Her father — this letter said — was anxious about affairs here. Once he had replied "somewhat impatiently." And "earlier" something had seemed sufficient to him "but not now."

Those who spoke of him mentioned, not her heaven, but "the other side of the veil." What sort of place was that, and where? Not distant, but all about us, with a disturbed spirit likely to appear through the veil with warnings like the ghost of Hamlet's father? No; that was medieval and absurd superstition. Yet:

"They heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day," so the Bible itself said in Genesis. "And behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain, from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent;

"And the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose,

"And came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many."

That was from the New Testament, somewhere. Ethel opened her Bible and found the passage in the Gospel of St. Matthew. Yes; the Bible itself, when you thought about it, suggested a very different sort of state from the heaven of the hymn book and the Sunday-school cards. She thought of things which St. Paul said — she always had liked Paul best as the finest and most human of the writers of the Bible; yet she had not taken literally what even he had said about the communion of saints and the spiritual body. She turned to his epistles and read a few familiar passages. What did Paul really mean?

Her father, who must be in heaven — whatever heaven actually was — wished her to see a James Quinlan of Chicago, and her father was concerned about it; she was to tell James Quinlan that not only her father but "Robert" said to do "it", — evidently something which James Quinlan was known to be quite disinclined to do. So she was to assure him that he would be happy when he had done it and that the cost "there" — that is, here in this world — was nothing.

Nothing compared to what? The reward in the next world?

She wondered why her father, having succeeded in saying so much, could not have told her more. Her father had wished to do something and had found it very difficult. Were the inhabitants of heaven, then, still in some sense finite as they still were not completely "from care released."

She longed to talk out these speculations and ob-

stacles with some one; with a very particular one, Barney Loutrelle. These, as Huston Adley said, were tremendous things, and to each one most highly intimate too. She would not like to confide her own faiths and doubts and gropings for the truth to any one but Barney who first had brought the upsetting questions to her; she remembered how considerably and with what gentleness he had brought her the word from her father.

After a while, she sat down and wrote to Barney.

She already had telegraphed her address; and she would have liked to telegraph him the information from his friend but, as she could not, she copied it fully into her letter.

"I shall try to find out at once which James Quinlan I should see," she finished.

But she did not set about it that afternoon. She had bathed and was resting, after having dispatched her letter to Quesnel, when a maid asked her if she wished to speak with her cousin, Mr. Bennet Cullen, who was calling her from downtown.

"Hello, Eth! So you are there!" he exclaimed to her over the 'phone, as though he had not been able to believe it until he heard her voice answer his. "What's the big idea in your going to cousin Oliver's?"

When she failed to answer him satisfactorily, he would not be put off from coming to see her.

"See here, Eth! You've got to tell me what's up. There's something a bit too queer about this whole business — the way you talk and your going to cousin Oliver's and — Oh, well; I'm on my way there now. You be ready to come right out with me."

CHAPTER XI

JAMES QUINLAN

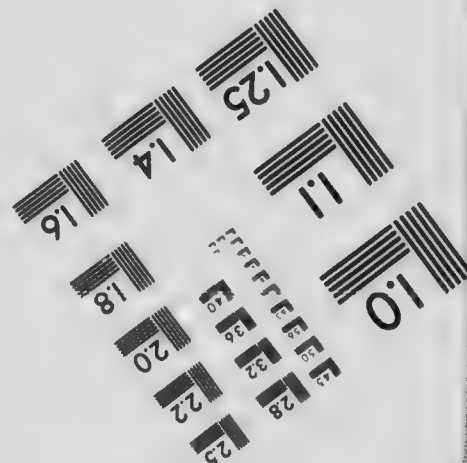
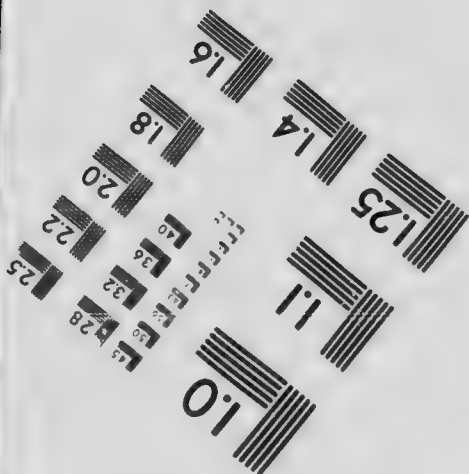
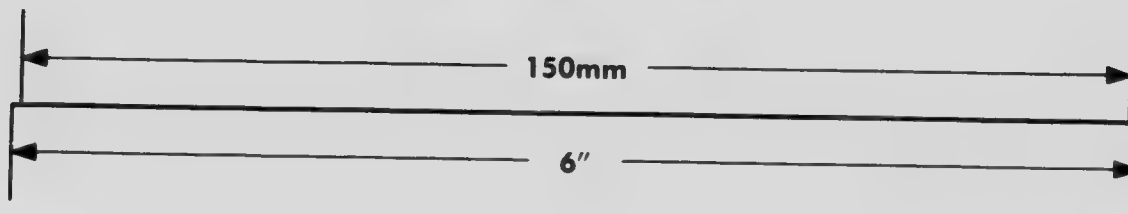
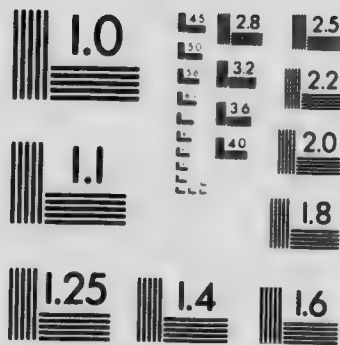
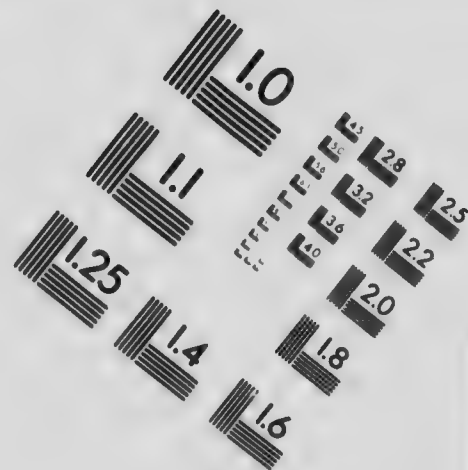
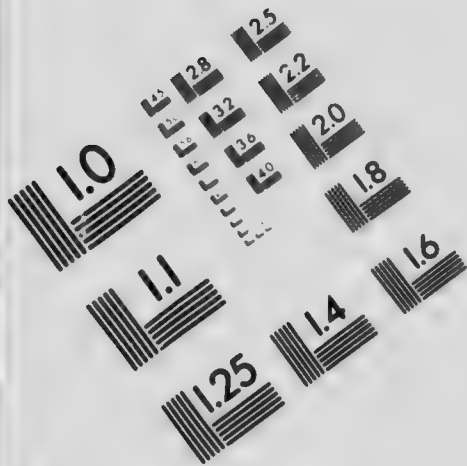
BENNET CULLEN was a hearty young man who considered that whenever he had something particularly difficult to do with anybody, it always made matters easier to give that person a good dinner; and in his cousin "Eth" he found he had an obstinate proposition.

"About the last girl in the world to act up, I'd have said you were," he rebuked her, with a sense of personal injury in her action, as she and he always had been the best of friends. At his first acquaintance with this cousin, upon the occasion when his father and mother brought her back from France to Chicago, he had found that she was an unusual girl in being invariably able to take care of herself, was "game" for almost anything, never was fussy when accidents happened to her and yet never tried to be, or cared about being, a boy. Indeed, she thought girls had quite as good a time, and she played with Julia as much as with him.

When they were older and went out together to dances, Eth was a mighty good one to have in your party; she wasn't critical of you, like a sister; she looked awfully well and danced wonderfully; the best sort of men wanted to know her; and altogether it was pretty good to possess the proprietorship in her which went with the introduction of "my cousin." When



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confronted with the intricate inconsistencies of personal relations between people involved in the family quarrel, Ethel had consistently displayed what Bennet considered good sense.

Of course he had been aware since his boyhood that Ethel's father was at outs with his own father and with his grandfather; when he grew older, Bennet recognized that this estrangement was due to Philip Carrew's squeamishness over something which he thought grandfather Cullen had done. Bennet himself had possessed enough energetic curiosity to ascertain that in his day grandfather must have — to employ Bennet's euphemism — “pulled his share of the rough stuff.” But, most obviously, grandfather's day had passed; its evils, whatever they had been, were or ought to be interred, and certainly not dug up at this day to disturb the family's enjoyment of the great benefits which grandfather had won by what he had done. Bennet was finding his life altogether too easy and diverting not to be positively infuriated at finding Ethel trying to stir up excitement again when every one else was so conveniently “quieted down” about grandfather.

The private school on the north side, to which Bennet had been sent when a boy; the carefully chosen preparatory school in Connecticut, which he had next attended, and finally Yale had turned him out a well-mannered, well-appearing, physically vigorous and stubborn-willed young man, aware of many satisfactions in his life and disturbed by no consciousness of serious faults. He had not been graduated from Yale, having been only in his junior year when the American declaration of war called him, together with all the rest of the able-bodied boys of his class, into a military

training camp. By quick thinking, clear speaking, straight standing and uncritical acceptance of orders given, he won a commission as lieutenant of artillery only to find himself fated, for his efficiency in imparting mechanical details to others, to remain on this side training successive drafts. At the end of the war and upon his release from service, he had decided against reëntering the university. He had not gone to college for the sake of instruction, and he never had considered a college course as having the least bearing upon the real business of life, except as it made him friends. He had gone to Yale to be able to speak of himself as a Yale man, and having won that prerogative and having ended his course for an honorable reason, he had entered his father's office at a most interesting and profitable time. For the Cullens dealt in raw materials, and there never was a time when raw materials were so demanded and when they commanded such prices.

It made Bennet particularly tired, when the government by its absurd taxes and labor by its outrageous demands were making it as hard as possible for his father and himself to do business, to have Ethel come along and turn up the family trouble again and perhaps start something she couldn't stop. As she had got herself into such a riot with grandfather that she wouldn't even go to his father's home, he'd take her out to dinner.

Ethel was willing to go; indeed, when she thought it over, she preferred to talk to Bennet in some public place rather than at his father's home or here at the house on Scott Street. Bennet and she had got along well largely because, from childhood, they had been frank with each other. She wanted to tell him fairly

of the reasons for her riot with their grandfather; but if she discussed the affair here with Bennet, she was sure to involve herself in another tumult. She had not admitted to herself the full effect upon her of the conflicts at St. Florentin until she found how she dreaded repeating the ordeal with her uncle or with her cousin.

"We'll go to the Blackstone?" Bennet invited. "Julia straggles in there with some people to-night, I think I recall."

He meant that they would be chaperoned in the same dining room by his sister and her party; but Ethel did not require that. Of course she was going out with her cousin, and every one who knew her would know him; but if he were not her cousin, she was too good a Westerner to hesitate about going to dinner with him.

"I'll have to wear my suit," was all she said.

At a table for two in the warm, gay, east dining room of the Blackstone, beside a window overlooking the lighted avenue, she let Bennet order his usual, well-selected and generous dinner. She was very hungry and relaxed; as some time to-morrow she must submit herself again to the strain of antagonism to those dearest to her here, at the bidding which had come from those dearer to her yet, who were dead; but for this hour it was very agreeable to forget quarrels of every sort and just have a good dinner, as Bennet was insisting, and to talk to him about their old trifles and listen to the lively, new music.

"You look rather like yourself now," Bennet praised her proudly when she smiled at something he said; he glanced from her to the people at the surrounding tables, and he found many gazing toward his table as people always did when he had "Eth" with him.

"Galli-Curei's singing to-night, I seem to recall. *Rigoletto* or some such happy little bit's on. Mother's giving a treat to a lot of returned canteeners in our cage; but we can find seats in somebody's box, if you cure 'bout hearing Galli. Do you?" he asked as eight o'clock drew near.

Ethel shook her head. Bennet was forming the hope that his dinner had dispelled her troubles, and she would now simply forget them. They had finished dessert and both were taking black coffee. Julia and her party either had not come to the hotel at all or were in another dining room; Bennet did not bother to look them up. Several acquaintances, on their way to and from other tables, had halted to say a few words to Ethel; and a woman in the last party to pass had asked Bennet:

"Tell me, you've not yet any positive word of the fate of Mrs. Oliver Cullen?"

"Nothing really positive," Bennet had replied.

The big room was clearing as groups departed for the opera; the nearest tables all were deserted. Bennet paid his check and lit a cigarette; he leaned easily upon the table.

"Well, what do you want to do now, Eth — talk?"

"Yes," she said.

Here and there she noticed uniformed men and, out upon the street, some one passed with a freeness in his step which reminded her of Barney Loutrelle. Bennet was not at all like Barney. They were nearly the same height, but Bennet was heavily built; his hands naturally were broader, though they showed no traces of long usage to manual work which Barney's hands retained. Physically, the two young men were very unlike, and in spirit, oh, totally different.

Bennet never had known anything but satisfactions with life, with himself, with his situation in the world; Bennet had never known what it was to want and to have to strive with all your will and strength.

Ethel flushed warmly, catching herself at this comparison; she could not remember ever having so analyzed a man in reference to another before.

"Well," Bennet said suddenly; and his habit of thus starting a sentence made her see in him a previously unmarked likeness to their grandfather, accentuated when Bennet gazed at her from across the table and hunched his chair slightly forward. "Tell me what our grandfather did to you this time besides not giving you the money, Eth."

Bennet had known that she had gone to St. Florentin for money; and she had informed him at Scott Street that she had not obtained it.

"Nothing to me, Ben," she said.

"What did he do, then?"

How could she tell him here? Not that any one need overhear them; for even the servants had withdrawn to a distance. Not that her statement would be too great a shock to him; he would not believe it. She could not make him credit it — so she was beginning to feel — because subtly it all had been becoming incredible to herself. At St. Florentin, seeing a solitary, wilful old man dwelling in exile with his wife and served by Miss Platt, her husband, and a couple of Indians, it had been possible to comprehend how her grandfather, threatened by the arrival of some one who sought Barney Loutrelle at Resurrection Rock, had dispatched Kincheloe to prevent the meeting. But in Chicago the whole air was different; the demeanor of hotel people and servants toward a grandson and a

granddaughter of Lucas Cullen; the eagerness of many people to speak to them and to advertise acquaintance with the family; such a trifle, indeed, as Bennet's careless assurance that they might go without tickets to the opera and, finding the family box occupied, might drop in upon "somebody's" box; all this showed the family of Lucas Cullen too surely established in the fabric of society and too powerful to be imagined as likely to be endangered, or even seriously disturbed, by any such event as the arrival of an unknown young man at a rock in Lake Huron.

The circumstances connected with Barney's appearance also lost credence here,—those strange letters from London which foretold so truly Bagley's and Ethel's presence at Resurrection Rock. In the north, people were ready to hear anything strange about the Rock; but here,—Ethel looked out at the motor cars passing on Michigan Avenue, at the long lines of the boulevard lights, at the many, matter-of-fact, self-absorbed people about; and she remained silent. The letter which had been awaiting her on Scott Street was as strange as the rest; but she decided to start with that.

"Do you know any one named Quinlan?" she asked.

"Old Jim Quinlan? Surely."

"James was the name," Ethel said, trying not to betray a start. "Who is he?"

"Funny old codger," Bennet informed. "Father used to have him about the south side yards."

"You employed him?"

"When he condescended to work, we did. Father told our foreman to take him on for old time's sake."

"Why?"

"He was with grandfather years ago."

"Oh; was there some one connected with him named Robert?" Ethel asked.

"Bob Quinlan? He was his grandson."

"Was?" Ethel repeated. "He's dead?"

"Shot down in flames near Cambrai, he was," Bennet said. "He got into aviation as observer and machine gunner. Papers had something about him, the same week Quentin Roosevelt went. Old Jim — I hear he went sort of nutty not long afterwards. It seemed that Bob was all he had left. Lost most of the rest of his family in disasters, some one said; then the war took Bob. We've the gold star for Bob at our offices now; just the other day father O.K'ed a design for our permanent memorial with his name on it. He worked for us a while, you see. What did you hear about the Quinlans?"

"Where's James Quinlan living now, Ben?"

"We don't know. Father was trying to find him just about Christmas. In connection with that memorial, I think. No; it was money — Bob's government insurance which was coming to Jim. That was it," Bennet corrected positively. "He'd been living on Fifty-seventh Street near Prairie — rented a room in a flat — and he'd left a couple of days before Christmas. Just packed up his valise and moved, giving no explanation. The way the people in the flat told it; we didn't consider anything in particular had happened to him; but we're on the general lookout for him. What do you know about him?" Bennet demanded again.

"How long ago was he associated with grandfather?" Ethel returned. "Where was it?"

"Why, back in the old pine days," Bennet replied impatiently. "Old Jim was head sawyer of one of

grandfather's mills in the lower peninsula before he went up across the Straits. Lost his fingers then; has only half his fingers on his right hand. Why?"

Ethel sat back in her chair, playing nervously with her coffee spoon and gazing down. She had supposed herself prepared to discover that the statements in Huston Adley's astonishing letter had substance; nevertheless the completeness of this verification upset her. There was not only a James Quinlan who had been associated with her grandfather; but he had possessed a Robert, very dear to him, who recently had died; and James Quinlan's knowledge of Lucas Cullen went back to the epoch of the cut of the white pine in the lower peninsula,—the years of the tall trees, mentioned by her grandmother, when other men were burning the timber and slashing it, and doing everything to get it out of the way, and Lucas Cullen had arrived in Michigan, a young man, and turned the trees into gold.

"I came back here because —" Ethel began, looking steadily at her cousin. "The trouble I had with grandfather at St. Florentin, Ben," she made another start, "was over a man whom Kincheloe killed on Resurrection Rock."

"What?" Bennet said, leaning forward and staring at her as though he had not heard aright. "What did you say?"

"Kincheloe killed a man on Resurrection Rock — in the house there, Ben — day before yesterday; or during the night."

Verification of the existence of a James Quinlan and of a Robert on the other side of the veil had restored Ethel's confidence in her convictions of what had happened at St. Florentin; yet she realized that since

she had once lost courage here in the gay hotel dining room overlooking the lighted, thronged boulevard, she might weaken again; so she plunged into facts, not at all as she had planned, but so as to commit her to the telling through to the end.

"Killed a man?" her cousin was repeating in a whisper, looking about swiftly and then bending further across the table. "You mean accidentally?"

"No; no, I don't think so, Ben."

"Then what do you mean?"

"He killed him; killed him, I think."

"You mean — murdered him?"

"Oh, Ben, I don't know; but I'm afraid so!"

"Miss Platt's husband murdered — killed some one!" Bennet repeated, himself now refusing the word he had tried to force from Ethel.

His incredulity was expressed in a manner so like that which his grandfather had feigned that Ethel jerked in a spasm of recollection of the struggle at St. Florentin.

"Yes, Ben," she said.

"Good Lord, he did; why?"

"I don't know."

"Who'd he kill — an Indian?"

"No; I don't know."

"What do you know then?" Bennet demanded irritably, but he still was whispering cautiously, and he glanced frequently about to make sure that no one was near enough to overhear. "You said you came back here because — that is, your trouble with grandfather was over a man Kincheloe killed. How'd that send you back or get you in wrong with grandfather?"

"Because grandfather was in it too, Ben."

"In it - grandfather? What do you mean? He was in what?"

"The killing of the man, Ben."

"What man?"

"The one killed on the Rock."

"But you said Kincheloe did that."

"He did; but for grandfather."

"What - what the devil -" Bennet scolded. He glanced about and shifted his feet as though to rise. If Ethel were going to say things like that, he thought that this was no place to say them; but his impatience to hear her foolishness and to combat her overcame his dread of being overheard. He sat down in his chair but bent close to her.

"Give me all of this," he commanded. "Straight."

So she told him quietly and without passion as "straight" as she could. She did not repeat to him the details of Barney's intimate confidences; but she told him about the manner of meeting Barney and their walk and talk together, and their finding the traces of the man who had slept in the shack opposite Rest Cabin; she told how Barney went to the Rock and how their grandfather watched him; she reported how Bagley had been waiting for Barney, what Bagley had done and what she, herself, had witnessed during the night at St. Florentin; she related how she followed Kincheloe in the morning, and how he turned back, and how Asa and she went to the Rock, and how she returned and accused their grandfather and he had called Barney Loutrelle and she had gone with Barney.

At the beginning she felt that Bennet, if not sympathetic, was not hostile toward her. He interrupted her abruptly several times, demanding that she make certain points clearer; then he angered and several

times seemed about to forbid her to go on; but, after glancing about and observing that no one seemed to suspect that they were engrossed in anything extraordinary, he bade her proceed. She omitted mention of her own letter from Huston Adley, as she had refrained from speaking of the supernatural portions of Barney's letters; and Bennet seemed to have forgotten her questions about Quinlan which had started their talk.

"You say you accused grandfather," he assailed her hotly, when she had finished, "of killing this Loutrelle pick-up of yours!"

"I told him I believed Kincheloe had done it and that he knew about it; and he did, Ben!"

"But you just said he had Loutrelle at the house waiting for you, and Loutrelle didn't even know anything had happened."

"That's true. I said I was mistaken. It wasn't Barney; it was —"

"Huh! you call him Barney, do you?"

"No; not to him," she went hot with confusion.

"But to yourself, I see. Well, go on."

"It was some one else they killed, Ben."

"Who do you mean by they?"

"Kincheloe and — grandfather."

"I'd not say that again to any one, if I were you, Ethel. I'd not even think it to myself again," he warned her unpleasantly. He had dropped entirely his familiar, fond "Eth." "You must be crazy."

"You weren't there, Ben."

"You — you fool," he said to her in pitying disgust. "You little fool."

She sat back, quite white and quivering under the constraint of controlling herself against Bennet's

anger. Only for emotional moments had she been able to imagine Bennet taking sides with her; yet she was not sorry that she had told him. There would have been something unfair — something partaking of the smug — in assuming that her cousin, knowing the same facts as herself, would take an opposite attitude. Her grandfather also was his, and Bennet had the right to learn from her exactly what she had discovered. But Bennet solved his problem simply by refusing to believe her. He was not fool enough to credit such craziness, fool meaning a person who would madly deprive himself of the visible advantages of remaining a grandchild in favor with Lucas Cullen. But it was not sufficient himself to refrain from such madness; if he let Ethel run around with such ideas, anything might happen.

"Yo 've told any of that stuff before, Ethel?" he challenged nervously, when this fear occurred to him.

"I've told you what I said to grandfather and grandmother and Miss Platt."

"I didn't mean them; how about people down here?"

"I've only seen Ira Ruggers and Mrs. Wain."

"Good Lord, you haven't told her?"

"Of course not."

"Oh, I couldn't know what you'd do now. How about this Barney friend of yours; what'll he do? What's he doing now?"

"He stayed there."

"Where?"

"At the Rock or Wheedon's. I haven't heard yet."

"Oh; ho was going to write you about him? Grandfather?"

"No," Ethel said, warming throughout. "He was."

"What? He's writing you?"

"And I'm writing him!" she confessed proudly. "We're doing this together; he's staying there to find out who was killed at the Rock and why; and I came down here for the same reason."

Bennet sat back, dazed. "You met him, you said, that morning on the train. You picked him up in the station at Escanaba; and you've —" Bennet was unable to proceed.

Ethel, too, was silent. She had not intended to divulge the plan upon which Barney and she had agreed; she had not intended to betray, as she had, her own feeling for Barney. Indeed, she had not been aware herself just what her feeling had become.

"He's not like your friends," she suddenly defended Barney belligerently. "He's not like — any one else in the world."

Bennet was able only to look his disgust; then he asked, "Since you're working this so much together, I suppose he wouldn't go to the local police — the sheriff, up there, isn't it — without letting you know?"

"No; I don't think he would."

"Then maybe there's time to control him."

"Control him how?"

"Shut him up, of course."

"Ben, if it's all my foolishness, what are you afraid of?"

"Afraid?" Bennet repeated. "Me? I'm afraid of nothing but the rotten low slander you'd like to lay on grandfather; you and your pick-up friend. I'd think you could see. Grandfather'll punish him and you, too, if you try it; but do you think you're doing any good to the family? Oh, you make me tired. Now how can I get at this Loutrelle friend of yours?"

"I think," Ethel said, rising, "I'll go home now, please, Ben."

And as she remained standing, he arose too, perforce, and escorted her from the room.

"I'll order a taxi and go home alone," she decided, when they had their coats and were in the lobby.

"Home?" he challenged.

"To cousin Agnes's."

"No, you won't. I'll take you up to our house and see if mother can get some sense into you," he said with as much force and acerbity as the nearness of other people permitted. "Wait here; I'll have my car in a minute."

But he had to cross the street to get it; and when he reentered the hotel she was gone. His first impulse was to follow her immediately to the house on Scott Street; his second was to drive so rapidly that he would pass her taxi and be waiting for her when she arrived; but he thought better of both plans. He remained downtown, calling Oliver's number after a while to learn that Ethel had arrived; then he dropped in at the opera, where he found his sister Julia and informed her that Ethel was in the city and he'd taken her to dinner. He saw his mother with her party of canteeners, but he only nodded to her.

It was while he was moodily sitting in the box with Julia's friends and pretending to be appreciative of Galli-Curci's "Caro Nome" that he recollected how Ethel had started to talk by inquiring about James Quinlan and Bob; and he wondered what place they had in the crazy business which Ethel had stirred up. His father — so Bennet assured himself — had been making his recent efforts to locate old Jim only because of that government insurance money; yet Ben-

net could not help thinking that his father had been more concerned in old Jim's whereabouts than one would have expected. Recollections of his father's anxiety disturbed Bennet so that he shifted restlessly in his seat and applauded Galli-Curci automatically while staring past her with vacant eyes.

Abruptly he began matching up observations of his own with those which Ethel had related to him, and he remembered that his father had seemed to him decidedly on edge over nothing a few days earlier; by reckoning, he discovered it was the same day upon which Ethel had found their grandfather so upset and upon which his father — so Ethel said — had sent that telegram to St. Florentin. Sitting in the dimly lit auditorium while the singers were going through the violent scenes with Sparafucile, Bennet found it annoyingly easy to visualize his grandfather going about the lower floor of the big house at St. Florentin with a loaded rifle under his arm and waiting for Kincheloe who was returning with the dogs, one of which had blood frozen in his hair. Ethel had related to Bennet that their grandfather had said of this blood, "Lad caught a fox"; but Bennet knew that his grandfather had not been waiting in the house with a loaded gun to guard against the attack of a fox.

Bennet did not doubt the exact truth of incidents which Ethel stated that she actually saw; but he had no patience with what she "supposed"; and he considered her conclusions absolutely lunatic. Yet the difficulty of supplying himself with more satisfying conclusions from the same facts kept him disturbed; when he returned home at midnight and saw that the light was still burning in his father's room, he went to the door and knocked.

CHAPTER XII

INFORMATION AND ALARMS

LUCAS CULLEN, Junior, had been at a large business "reconstruction" dinner that evening while his wife was entertaining her canteeners at *Rigoletto*; he had been one of the speakers. He ate little and drank not at all when he was to speak; but he usually drank after his speech, especially if it were a success, as it almost always was. Bennet thought, when he entered his father's room, that this night's speech had gone well. His father's man had removed Lucas's dinner clothes and handed him a dressing gown. Lucas dismissed the man when he saw his son, and he belted the dressing gown carefully about him. Lucas was shorter than his father by almost two inches but taller than his son; he had too much stomach, when one saw him without trousers and waistcoat; but he did not appear lacking in health. Indeed, vigor distinguished him only less than, a generation ago, it had marked his father. And if the younger Lucas were less rugged, yet he was a better looking man, with features which were firm and forceful enough without being belligerent or overriding; for the younger Lucas had begun to do business about the time when it ceased to be advisable for even the most masterful man to openly override his competitors and damn and defy the public. Old Lucas called his son a trimmer and said that young Lucas

never would have put through, by his methods, what his father had done. This was true; and young Lucas withheld the obvious rejoinder that his father's methods would instantly start Federal prosecutions now. So Lucas, Junior, continued to trim to the times. Bennet, who had been long enough in the offices to have some insight into the Cullen methods, wished that his father would not "guff" the public quite so hard. But his father undeniably was an influential man; and Bennet admired him immensely.

"Anything important bothering you, boy?" Lucas asked cordially.

Bennet did not mean to betray that he was worrying; he had planned only to start a chat with his father, as he frequently did when they both were about late at night and neither sleepy. Then he had meant to mention Ethel casually; but now he could not.

"Ethel came back to town this afternoon, father," he said.

"Yes," Lucas said. "You saw her? Where's she staying?"

Bennet informed him. "She's got herself in no end of a row with grandfather," he added.

"Yes," Lucas said again. "Your grandfather sent down a letter on the train she took. I found it here to-night."

Bennet, following his glance, observed an envelope with a special delivery stamp on his father's dressing stand. "Oh, then he told you all about the row."

"Yes."

"She must have gone loony, father. I couldn't do anything with her. I was thinking if you or mother would send for her or go to see her to-morrow morning, you could knock some sense into her."

"Your mother," Lucas said, "will telephone Ethel in the morning."

"That's good, father."

"That all, boy?"

"Yes," Bennet said.

"Good night, boy."

But Bennet wanted to know something more; he delayed, thinking how to lead to it indirectly, until his hesitation obliged him to ask outright:

"Father, what's Jim Quinlan to do in this?" And for the first time in his life, Bennet saw his father start like an ordinary man who may be frightened. Very quickly his father recovered and was Lucas Cul-
len, Junior, once more.

"Who said Jim Quinlan had?" he asked calmly.

"Ethel."

"What did she say?"

"Why, she really only asked about a James Quinlan, if we employed one, father. She didn't seem to know anything concerning him but —" At his father's request, Bennet repeated just about what Ethel had said.

"That's all right," Lucas said finally. "Now go on to bed, boy."

Bennet looked up at his father, who somehow seemed to have got a little disheveled while they were talking; probably his thick, black hair had been a little mussed before, but Bennet had not noticed it; and it seemed to him that his father's eyes were duller. Bennet returned to his own room, rather miserably, and conscious that affairs in his family, which had seemed so serene only a few hours ago, had suddenly taken a turn for the perilous; with the bitter perverseness of youth suddenly disturbed in the unthreatened enjoyment of ease and advantage, he blamed not the cause of the

danger but its discoverer. Indignantly he assailed Ethel, his dearest cousin. She was a wild, crazy idiot to go poking into "things." He worked himself into such a fever about it that, long after opening his windows and getting into bed, he lay tossing and wide awake.

His father's family had moved, a few years before, to one of those new apartments occupying an entire floor of a great residence building erected upon the recently made land famous locally as "Cap Streeter's deestrick of Lake Michigan." Not many years ago, the land was only a sand bar off the fashionable north shore of the city, when the picturesque argosy of the peppery captain grounded upon the bar, and Cap Streeter claimed it his own by right of discovery and fortified and defended it. But his defense — both by rifle and by law — failed; the city filled out to the bar and beyond it, extending the land like a cape into the lake; the Shore Drive now runs about the cape, and it is as fashionable to live upon it as anywhere in Chicago.

Bennet's room had a window to the north, looking up the lake, and through the window now was blowing the cold, clean air from the water and ice and the snow-clad shores of northern Michigan. It made Bennet think, when he did not want to, of his grandfather living far up the water past the other end of the lake in his lonely house on the shore opposite that always strange — and now dangerous — Resurrection Rock. It made him think of the Michigan woodland, cleared now of the old, tall trees from which the family wealth had come. His grandfather — Ethel believed — had "done" something in the time of the felling of the tall white pines. Of course their grandfather had done something; Bennet did not deny the probability of that.

But it was all over now. Maybe not quite all over; for consequences sometimes hang on remarkably; but with a little patience and a little tolerance — Bennet thought — everything would come out clean and all right. The only requirement was to shut up "Eth" and that pick-up friend of hers, Barney Loutrelle.

"Oh, damn him!" Bennet suddenly sat upright in bed when he thought about Barney Loutrelle knowing as much as Ethel and going about loose up near St. Florentin. He had meant to mention Loutrelle to his father and discuss what was to be done about him; but Bennet had been too disturbed following his mention of Jim Quinlan. For Bennet then had realized that his father must be linked with his grandfather in the knowledge of the unfortunate occurrence in the past which still held power to upset the family. Bennet had believed — and he had liked to believe — that his father had been as much out of it as he himself had been kept. But really the fact made no difference; for the thing was past and done and would remain done if Ethel could be controlled and something immediate and adequate said to Barney Loutrelle.

Bennet's mother undertook the task of controlling Ethel the next morning; but though Myra called at Scott Street as early as her dignity permitted, Ethel already was gone. Mrs. Wain knew only that she had departed without expectation of returning before evening.

Ethel had journeyed by street car to Fifty-seventh Street where, after some difficulty, she located the apartment at which James Quinlan had roomed. The woman who had looked after him proved to be wholly ignorant of, and not exceedingly interested in Quinlan's whereabouts and his reasons for leaving; the date of

his departure had been December twenty-fourth. Ethel returned uptown and called at the newspaper offices, where she found that she had no response to her advertisements for Bagley; so she went back to Scott Street late in the afternoon and there met her aunt upon Myra's third attempt to find her. She declined firmly, but without discussion, aunt Myra's cordial invitation to stay with the family on the outer Drive.

Before writing to Barney that night, Ethel reread — as many times during the day she had already done — the letter from Huston Adley. Her immediate course of action had become quite plain to her; yet she reconsidered thoughtfully before recording her purpose.

"My dear Mr. Loutrelle," she addressed Barney. "Last night I had a remarkable experience —" and she detailed how she had confirmed, through her cousin, the existence of James Quinlan and Robert and the history of James Quinlan's association with her grandfather and his recent disappearance.

I gained really very little more to-day, she continued, and except as I learn incidents from my uncle or cousins, I do not think I am likely to get, in any ordinary way, anything more to help us, as Marcellus Clarke remains away and Bagley does not appear.

Besides, everything else seems secondary to the one certain thing which I should do; this is to try to speak with and to hear my Father.

I suppose I must seem stupid to you not to have thought of this much earlier; but the truth is I have been thinking about it a very great deal — too much, perhaps.

Before I met you and you told me of your experience with the Philip Carew who wished to speak with you,

and before this letter about my father came to me, I might have visited a medium without thinking so much about what I was doing. I never did take part in a sitting — though of course I'd heard about them, and I've known plenty of people who did — because it seemed to me silly and making light of a sacred thing. It appeared to be playing a game of pretend-talking with dead people when you weren't. And the queer part about discovering that — sometimes, at least, as Huston Adley says — we here may communicate with our dead, is how much prepared you want to be before you assume to speak through the veil to some one you loved and whom you thought you could never speak to again.

Why, it would be nothing at all for me to find a medium and arrange a sitting and ask questions if I didn't believe that my father may be there to speak to me — and my mother, whom I can't remember at all — well, that makes me weak and reverent and almost too much afraid.

She had written thus far rapidly, and suddenly she stopped, glanced at her words with a gasp and started to crumple the page; but she did not.

I think, she continued after a minute, that though you had lost no one close to you, as I had my father, yet you knew this feeling. You, too, never knew your mother; and you told me how you walked the streets of London after that first successful sitting. Probably I shall have, like you, several unsatisfactory trials at first. Yet I may find my father the first time; they say he has been trying so hard to talk to me.

I want to be very sure that, when I try, it will be through some fitting person — that nothing about my approach to him will degrade him or lead me into danger of offending or losing or ever misunderstanding

him. For that reason, I would be very glad if you could write me whatever you think will help me; you know how little I know about these matters; and I do not know whom to approach here. It would be far better for me if you could happen to be here. Oh, I am not asking that. But if you find you've — she crossed that out and substituted — we've nothing more to gain by your remaining near the Rock, come down here and I'll wait for you.

Your friend,

ETHEL CAREW.

She had the letter mailed and, alone in her room, she consulted the Bible for further reference to communications from heaven. She found several in the gospel of St. Luke.

And there appeared unto him an angel of the Lord —

Then she read how Zacharias doubted the angel.

And the angel, answering, said unto him, I am Gabriel, that stand in the presence of God; and am sent to speak unto thee. And behold thou shalt be dumb, and not able to speak . . . because thou believest not my words.

Then she read the passage where the messenger from heaven came to the shepherds keeping watch over their flocks when Christ was born.

And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them; and they were sore afraid.

And the angel said unto them: Fear not; for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy. . . .

And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God, and saying . . .

It seemed, Ethel thought, that when there was sufficient occasion, the angels of their own accord appeared and not only succeeded in making their message heard but in striking dumb one who doubted them. For great events, the heavens opened; could it be true now that the gates of eternity might swing to and fro for the passing of souls earthward bound on trivial, mortal errands? Was she blasphemous to imagine that she might, of her own act, refer to her father in heaven the low, frightful deed which Merrill Kincheloe had performed on the Rock?

She was a little quivery as she undressed and made ready for bed. Mrs. Wain and the servants had retired earlier, and it was dark and quiet throughout the house. Ethel slipped a robe over her nightgown and turned on the hall lights and went into the room which had been her cousin Agnes's and switched on the light there. The idea had seized Ethel that cousin Agnes had returned to her room; of course she had not. Neither in the dark nor in the light was there manifestation of any sort; yet Ethel better understood Mrs. Wain's stubbornness in expecting Mrs. Oliver Cullen's return. It was difficult, when living among the articles chosen and arranged by Agnes and so expressive of her tireless vitality, to believe that she could have been completely obliterated. Cousin Oliver was different; one could accept an end to him.

Ethel remained a few minutes in Agnes's room, looking about. When a person suddenly relinquishes life, many activities related to that person automatically continue for a while, for instance, mail for the deceased is delivered. Agnes's business mail had been forwarded to the agent appointed to care for her affairs while the disposition of her holdings were being de-

terminated in court; but purely personal correspondence had come to this house, and Mrs. Wain had laid it upon the table in Agnes's room. Ethel glanced at this heap idly and turned over some of the envelopes, wondering who finally was to dispose of them.

There was a large, flat package from London, tied with cord and stamped with English postage: the censor had opened it, sealed it again and sent it on. The paper bore the legend, "Photographs."

Perhaps only because it was from London, and so much of deep interest to Ethel had come by post thence that she examined this package hesitantly and then decided to open it.

She found three photographs, all identical, of a group of young men in uniform who appeared to be officers of the Canadian and of the American armies. The faces were all strange to Ethel until, with a start which stopped the beat of her heart, she recognized Barney Loutrelle. He was neither the most nor the least prominent of the group which counted eleven members; he was standing a little to the right of the center and in the second row; but in each of the prints his identity was unmistakable.

It might be — Ethel argued hollowly with herself — it might be merely a coincidence. Cousin Agnes might have known any of the other men; she had done a marvellous amount of work during the war and had made friends with hundreds of soldiers. But Barney was in that picture of which she had desired three prints; a receipt from the photographer, mailed with the prints, proved that Mrs. Oliver Cullen herself had ordered and paid for the pictures.

Ethel resolved that she must discover the meaning, if possible; so she set to examining the rest of Agnes's

mail. Some one had opened most of the envelopes, probably to ascertain whether the contents were purely personal or should be turned over to the court representative; Ethel discovered that her cousin's wife had taken active part in more enterprises for others and had possessed even a wider circle of friends of every sort than she had imagined; but she came upon nothing which referred in any way to the picture of the group of officers or to Barney Loutrelle.

Ethel tied up two of the prints in their wrapping and took the other to her room. At moments she thought that she should tell Barney about it as early as possible; at other times she knew that she could not, until the meaning of its possession by Agnes became clearer, or at least until it was certain that Agnes had obtained the photographs because of him. What would he think, if she told him? She remembered how he had looked when he had stood before the fire in the cabin with his hands outstretched and she had spoken to him suddenly of himself; and how he had flushed when he turned to her. So she held his photograph before her and thought.

Her uncle Lucas called early the next morning to ask what she was doing about the business matters concerning which she had consulted him several days ago. When she said that she had written to Wyoming that she had failed to obtain help from her family, he told her he would wire Wyoming to disregard her letter; he had decided to "protect" her interests in the projects under way.

She thanked him and made no comment; he — being Lucas, Junior, not Senior — made no comment and asked no pledges before he departed.

That afternoon she received a letter from Barney in

which he reported that upon his return to the Rock he had found affairs just as she had left them; he had been sleeping at the Rock, without interference from Wheedon and without being visited by any one else except "Sam Green Sky who, I must say, is one hundred and ten per cent. curious about me — in the daytime — either on his own account or for some one else.

"I have seen no one from St. Florentin," Barney continued. "But I think — and Asa agrees with me — that Kincheloe has got out. I don't know when or where; but he is not about. I have found an Indian — Jim Ozibee, do you know him — who saw a stranger about here three days ago who, I think, is the fellow that slept in that shack opposite Rest Cabin, Miss Carew. From what I can make out from Ozibee, he was an old man who seemed a bit off his head from exposure, perhaps. Anyway, he seemed wholly purposeless and harmless, and I think we were wrong in connecting him up with our affair. I couldn't obtain any better description of him than he was tall and gray-haired and wore a short mitten on his right hand as the ends of his fingers were off."

This determined Ethel to telegraph Barney to come at once to Chicago unless there were developments at St. Florentin. He received the message the next morning and replied by wire that he was taking the train that night. But before him, two others took the train from Quesnel for Chicago — Lucas Cullen, Senior, and his wife. And upon the day of their arrival, the first news confirming the assumption of Agnes's death reached the city.

It came to Lucas Cullen, Junior, in a communication not dissimilar to that letter which had awaited Ethel at

Scott Street; but Lucas's letter, instead of being from an unknown person, was from an English peer of international reputation for his work in sciences. He wrote privately to Lucas, however; and his purpose was to report a message which he had received from the other world which stated that "Agnes Cullen", having become cognizant, in the next existence, that uncertainty as to her death was causing confusion in this world, wished it known positively that she was dead.

CHAPTER XIII

“TOWARDS GOD AND TOWARDS MAN”

LUCAS CULLEN, Senior, received information of this extraordinary bit of intelligence soon after his arrival at his son's home.

“Arrant nonsense!” he pronounced emphatically, when Lucas, Junior, reported it; and the old man did not let it interrupt his railing at his son for abiding in such quarters as that apartment.

“You'd think we'd not an acre of land in the family to see you coop yourself up on a shelf on top of eight other roosts full of cackling idiots;” so the elder Lucas referred to the lower apartments and to their occupants whose voices he imagined he heard in spite of the vaunted deadening of floors and ceilings. For, having arrived in no very pleasing mood, he welcomed every circumstance which gave him cause for irritation. Unable to relieve himself about the matters actually weighing upon his mind, it was convenient to find annoyances to scold about,—such as the fact that his son had not a double bed in his house and each member of the family was supplied with a separate suite.

“Fads and pretenses! Separate rooms for man and wife!—What was that tomfoolery from Sir—Sir—” he suddenly demanded when he had exhausted the bedroom subject.

“Horace Clebourne,” his son supplied the name of their English correspondent.

"Well, what did he say?" Lucas, Senior, challenged again and read through the tomfoolery only to dismiss it once more with contempt. "Imagine Oliver's wife wanting to relieve my mind! Spooks!"

But his omnivorous reading of these last few years had presented to his attention many paragraphs and occasional serious essays and articles having to do with "spooks"; these had angered him so greatly that he had read through several of them and emerged with only greater disdain for the subject than before. However, the subject of "spooks" had never taken a practical bearing before; now it had; and Lucas's mind, for more than seventy years, had been shrewd and pragmatic; so between his scoldings, he began turning over this offensive subject and soon considered something after this fashion:

"Here you are, an old fool not far from fourscore years; you've been waiting for quite a while for something to happen. It happened last September, and for four months you've been trying to prove it. Along comes the first confirmation of it, and you call it tomfoolery."

So Lucas forsook his son's shelf about the middle of the afternoon of that day and startled the chauffeur of Myra's town car, lent for the afternoon, by ordering him to go at once to the public library. There, after some querulous inquiry, Lucas Cullen, Senior, for the first time in his life, found himself in a reference room.

As a consequence, he had another talk with his son that evening when the two were alone in the smoking room overlooking the lake.

"I'm going to see Jaccard to-morrow, Luke," so Lucas suddenly announced.

"Jaccard telephoned to-day," Luke said. "He wanted to know when you'd see him, father. He heard you were in town."

Jaccard was the lawyer who most frequently had appeared for Lucas, Senior, upon the not infrequent occasions when he had required a competent representative in court. A younger attorney customarily advised Luke, the son, upon confidential, legal questions.

"How'd Jaccard hear?" Lucas asked.

His son neglected to inform him. "Myra stopped in at Scott Street again this afternoon," Luke said. "Ethel was out."

"She seems to be always out," Lucas complained. "What doing?"

"I don't know," Luke admitted.

"Well, why don't you?"

"Of course, father," Luke defended himself, "I could find out —"

"Then why haven't you?"

"Not what she did to-day but what she'll do to-morrow. The objection is that would involve taking some one else in."

"I don't see that! I don't see that!"

"Kincheloe," Luke said, his bland lips wincing a little; "he called me this afternoon."

Lucas started in spite of himself and then continued the jerk of his arm into a motion to reach into his vest pocket for a cigar which he chewed without lighting.

"What did he want?"

"Me to send some money to his brokers —"

"His brokers!" Lucas grunted in contempt.

"He seems to have acquired some with rather unusual ability to guess the market wrong — even for

a broker," Luke said dryly. "He had some margins to protect; he's playing one New York stock and one local — U. S. steel and Union Carbide, I believe." He paused meditatively.

"Well," Lucas questioned after a minute, "what did you do?"

"To his margins? Protected them," Luke informed quietly. "I was thinking —" he began to explain the connection of this topic of Miss Platt's husband with their previous conversation.

"I understand what you were thinking," his father said. Nevertheless the son explained:

"I'd like to be sure that any one we engaged to observe the occupations of my niece did not have brokers. It is quite enough to have Kincheloe call up our office and tell Slawson to protect a margin for him — quick!" Slawson was Luke's personal secretary; but Slawson was no Miss Platt, and Luke preferred the man to know as little as possible about his private affairs. "I don't care for it, father," Luke said.

"Damn!" Lucas jerked, standing up. "He said that, did he? Quick?"

"He said that since I was not in the office — I wasn't — that Slawson could find me on the 'phone right away and learn it would be all right."

"Well, did he find you?"

"Yes."

"And you told him it would be all right?"

"Yes."

"Don't do it again!" Lucas brought his first down upon a table top. "Tell him to go to hell — to hell — to hell!" the old man shouted violently. "Tell Slawson to tell him that. Tell everybody! What would

he do against you? What would he dare try? Kincheloe! But every one could bluff you! You're afraid — you've been chicken-hearted all your life! You trim and turn. Tell 'em all to go to hell, I say!"

He forgot, in his ferocity, what he had been discussing and required a minute or so before he recalled.

"About Ethel's operations; so you don't know anything?"

"Myra sees her, or attempts to, daily; and Bennet gets in there every day."

"Hump! I'll handle the business of some one knowing what's she's about, if you're so eternally afraid of being held up by anybody." He snapped his chewed cigar into the grate and bit on another. "Quinlan," he said to himself but without taking precaution against his son's hearing. "She knew that the night she got here."

"Bennet said," Luke put in, "that she knew only the name."

"Well, where did she hear that?"

Lucas succeeded in dismissing this problem only by forcing his thought about to the idea which had brought up Jaccard.

"I was down at the public library most of the afternoon, Luke," he announced suddenly.

"Where?"

"Afterwards I dropped in at McClurg's; I bought some of the books. I brought them home." He inclined slightly toward that objectionable, single-bedded room which was his. "Sir Horace Clebourne doesn't seem to be the only idiot who takes to that tomfoolery."

"No," said Luke, "they're all sorts."

"Eh? You've been thinking about it too?"

"A little," Luke admitted.

"But done nothing, I'll warrant. Well, I'm about to do something. If it was here in Chicago now, they'd laugh me out of court; but in England and London — Luke, do you know what sensible men over there are doing? High-ups, brainy men with position; not lunatics and women; big men — or some people are powerful liars."

"What are you considering doing?" his son inquired.

Lucas laughed as he liked to laugh when planning a shrewd and clever coup. "Hale Sir Horace Clebourne into court, of course, to swear for us that Oliver's wife is dead! He's high enough, ain't he? And from what I make out, the judge of the case — or do they call him My Lord High Justice in London — well, he'll just be coming out of a séance. The jury — every man of 'em — will all have spook messages of their own that they believe in; my local London counsel — what do they call him there, Luke?"

"Solicitor," Luke supplied.

"That's it. My solicitor will be bang up in the business; he'll believe in spirits all through; and likely enough solicitor for the other side will be believing on the quiet. We'll get a good old English ruling — a precedent; leave it to Jaccard to get a precedent. No one over there will care; they're English. They'll just be interested in the idea of the precedent and in backing up their own royal brains. Then when we have our English ruling, we'll carry it into our courts on the verity — is that a good, legal-sounding word, Luke?"

"I think it will do," Luke said.

"On the verity of the death of our dear Agnes, as

already presumed by the court — but not proved. So we prove it; witness, Agnes herself; testimony taken and sworn to by Sir Horace Clebourne, Doctor of Science, Baronet and the rest; sworn to by the best brains of England. We'll get 'em. I know it's new, son — it's new; but the old man never had to wait for some one else to show how to do a thing."

Luke gazed at his father, uncertain for a minute whether the old man were wholly serious. His father was never more offensive to him than when he chuckled in satisfaction at his own smartness.

"It would not be so entirely new," Luke said tartly. "They've had spirit cases in court in England."

"What? They have? To prove whether or not some one was dead?"

"Not that, so far as I know; but they've tried a case to determine the question of fraud in alleged spirit communication."

"So? How did it come out?"

"I don't know that I saw."

"Jaccard will know or find out," Lucas said confidently. "Of course, if we started the case here, we'd be laughed out of court," he repeated. "But in England, in its state of mind about spirits —"

Luke regarded his father more respectfully. "I wouldn't say about Chicago now," he volunteered after a moment. "Do you know Mrs. Stanton-Fielding?"

"Heard of her, of course," Lucas replied, lighting his cigar and pulling at it. The lady was in one of those social circles, he knew, which frequently intersected Myra's, and she was famous for her energies in many directions. "What's she at now?"

"Spirit communication; she went in hard for it this winter. I heard last fall, when different men here

were losing their sons, she claimed to be hearing from them."

"The boys, you mean."

"Of course. I didn't pay much attention myself; had no occasion to. But Fred Halley did. His boy, Arthur — a fine fellow, he was; captain of infantry — was killed going over the top. About a month afterwards, Mrs. Stanton-Fielding wrote Fred that she was in communication with Arthur. Fred — well, Fred went to see her. He came over to the club afterwards; pretty shaky. Didn't have any lunch; went right home. Had to see his wife and tell her. I don't think that I ever saw a man more — moved in my life," Luke said thoughtfully. "You couldn't convince him, if you cared to try, that he hadn't been talking with Arthur. I heard the same thing later from George Forth, who lost his son; and Vin Parding."

"Parding?" Lucas exclaimed. He knew Parding; Vin was one of the city's most prominent lawyers and had been a judge.

"After effect of war losses, of course; as abroad," Luke said; but he continued to regard his father with more deference. The early exploits of the Cullens were replete with titles and claims established on contentions which, at the time, must have seemed ridiculous; yet Lucas — and Jaccard — had established them. They were staid, accepted precedents now, printed in law books and frequently quoted in courts. Luke determined to keep an open mind as to the results of his father and Jaccard working together again.

Lucas went to his room, still thinking deeply. He found there his wife and her bed, which she had had brought from her adjoining suite and placed beside

his; so the two old people undressed and went to bed as they had for fifty years, talking of little incidents of the day, how their children were looking and feeling and of their own bodily ailments. Lucas's mind was not on his conversation; and Sarah did not expect it to be when he was talking only with her. When he stretched out his long form in bed, one strong, muscular arm reached to her pillow and he held her thin body for a moment.

"Next week Saturday is Cecilia's birthday," she whispered. "We must start off a gift to her by to-morrow."

"Yes, Sarah," he said. "Let's see; she's forty-six? Can she be?"

"Forty-seven, Lucas."

"It was snowy that night and colder than this, Sarah. I've never forgotten that. Thursday it was; the doctor said there was no need to start to Traverse before Sunday. And Thursday — I sent Quinlan —"

The slight little body suddenly jerked in his arms at mention of the name; but the strong man held steady. "Quinlan," he repeated the name evenly. "I sent him to try to make Traverse for the doctor that night — but the baby came to you and me alone, Sarah, with the lumberjacks outside."

He raised up in bed, bent over and kissed her. "Good night, girl," he said. "Good night, boy," she replied.

He rolled back into his own bed and forthwith went to sleep. But Sarah stayed awake. Thoughts of the cabin in the tall trees of the old Michigan forest forty-seven years ago continued in her mind with images of her boy as he had been at that time of the birth of their baby and later, when *it* had occurred,— that circum-

stance which neither ever directly mentioned to the other but which had been living with them for the generations of their children and their children's children. There had been months and, indeed, years throughout which memories of it had become less poignant through the interposition of other and all unrelated events; then associations renewed it and made its memory, for Sarah at least, all but unbearable.

Against the weight of his guilt, she had built up a prop of defense which she had spoken in part to Ethel. Her husband — her boy to whom alone with her in the cabin in the winter forest, their baby had come — had done evil; but, in requital, he had wrought much greater good, as men reckoned good. She had realized that from the evil he had done other wrongs had sprung, as she had seen greater advantages grow from the benefits which he had brought to others; but the wrongs had seemed to her to be running out and soon to stop of their own accord. Now instead —

She arose very quietly and, making sure that her boy was so sound asleep that the light would not waken him, she switched on the shaded bulb above his bed and gazed at him.

Repentance; no, nothing in his face, even when softened in sleep, suggested its possibility. His face was dogged, determined as ever. Cruel? No; she could not think that. Gentle he could be; how patient and gentle he had been that night alone with her when Cecilia came! But he had lived his life unrepentant; and so, in the end, he would die.

The light seemed to disturb him so that his jaw set harder, and one hand, which lay above the bed cover, clenched.

"— to hell. Hell — to hell — to hell!" she heard him mutter. "Anybody could bluff you; but not me! Why didn't you send him to me!" Then, in an almost inaudible whisper, "Quinlan — where did she hear that? — Jaccard."

Sarah Cullen switched out the light and slipped into that now bedless room adjoining to find a box of capsules which she frequently took, these days. Lucas knew about them; the doctor called them only aids to circulation; and as Sarah always put the re-filled prescription in the old pill box, he had no idea how often the capsules had become necessary. He required nothing whatever of this sort; and Sarah had no fear that he was soon to die; yet it was of him that she was thinking when she turned to that page in the Episcopal prayer book which says:

"Since therefore you are soon to pass into an endless and unchangeable state," she half read, half repeated the familiar passage to herself, "into an endless and unchangeable state, and your future happiness or misery depends upon the few moments which are left you, I require you strictly to examine yourself and your estate both towards God and towards Man; and let no worldly consideration hinder you from making a true and full confession of your sins, and giving all the satisfaction which is in your power to every one whom you have wronged, or injured; that you may find mercy at your heavenly Father's hand, for Christ's sake, and not be condemned in the dreadful day of judgment."

Sarah knew herself to be the one likely not to awaken some morning before so very long; and for herself to die was not a terrible thought; but to leave her boy unrepentant to "appear before the Judge of all flesh

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who, as he announces blessings on the righteous, shall likewise say, with a terrible voice of most just judgment, to the wicked, 'Go ye accursed, into the fire everlasting.' "

She sank down upon her knees in prayer; and when she returned to the other room, it was so silently that Lucas, upon rising in the morning, believed she had slept soundly through the night, as had he. They had breakfast together with Luke and Bennet, while Myra and Julia were still in bed; then Lucas went downtown with his son and grandson; and Jaccard came over to the office.

Jaccard proved to be cognizant of the whereabouts of a private detective who could be depended upon not to sell out to any one else and not to inquire into any private matter further than instructed. So after Lucas completed his business with Jaccard, he himself made an appointment with the "operative" who proved so extremely competent an individual that when Ethel left the house on Scott Street that afternoon she had no idea whatever that she was followed.

"Started work 2:15 P. M. opposite — Scott Street. Grocer, L. P. Sauber, delivered several packages at rear 2:35. No other person passed in or out until young lady in blue cloth coat, toque, tan boots, evidently Miss Ethel Carew, left by front door 2:58." So read that portion of the confidential report which was supplied to Lucas early that evening.

"Followed her to State and Division where she took street car south to — N. State Street where she rang, was admitted at 3:20 and remained until seven minutes to four. Meanwhile three men and five women passed in and out. Inquiry established that number — is establishment of a Mrs. H. J. Davol, a professional

psychic medium of apparently high-class practice; no police-court record of arrest or conviction.

"E. C. went to drug store, purchased tooth paste and stamps, returning then by same route to — Scott Street, where entered 4:27. No one went in or out but several times woman, thought to be E. C., appeared at front window as though expecting some one. At 5:12 young man in military cap and overcoat, walking rapidly, stopped before house, evidently recognizing it by number; rang bell and soon was admitted. He was —"

There followed, for Lucas's edification, an excellent and unprejudiced description of Barney Loutrelle; a precise report of his period of stay within the house; the irruption of Bennet Cullen and the time of his stay; the means and manner of departure of Ethel Carew, Barney Loutrelle and Bennet Cullen; their destination and what they did upon that epochal evening.

CHAPTER XIV

BARNEY LOUTRELLE

THE young man who called himself Barney, because an Indian had used that name for him, and who had added the surname, Loutrelle, had never, for himself and upon his personal errand, entered such a home as that on Scott Street. Of course, when he had been serving as a soldier abroad, and particularly after his conduct in the field had won him a commission, he had gone as guest to many great private houses, both in England and in France,—to town houses near Buckingham Palace, to marvellously perfect and story-book-like country places in Sussex and Kent; to the *maisons* and *apartments* where a dweller upon the Avenue Kléber or the Boulevard de Bois de Boulogne was *chez lui* and to the châteaux of the Loire. Barney had appreciated and greatly benefited by the privileges of these visits; but he had never been stupid enough to imagine that the gracious English and French gentlemen and ladies welcomed him into their homes in other than a sort of official capacity; he knew that no matter who, or what, he was, the mere fact that he was offering his life in their cause won him indulgence. Of course, Barney had made many warm, intimate friends in his Canadian battalion, where he served until the United States came into the war; but most of his comrades had been killed. Huston Adley, whose cousins lived in Kensington, was

almost his only friend who had a home to offer for Barney's entertainment; and that Kensington home, though far finer than that of any friend whom Barney had previously visited, was no equal of Oliver Cullen's house on Scott Street.

Before the war, Barney had known little beyond the Michigan hills and farms, the lakes and woods of Charlevoix County and the little rural city of Boyne, nestled in a sort of cup at the eastern end of Pine Lake, near the northern tip of the lower Michigan peninsula; and Barney could clearly remember when Boyne was a distinctly wonderful, mysterious and awe-inspiring place with its wide, treeless Water Street, extending two squares with two-story buildings close together, sheltering food shops, hardware, dry-goods and drug stores, banks and pool rooms. Down by the water's edge, Lake Street ribbed it, running in one direction to North Boyne, with its score of little cottages about the chemical works, the mill and the iron foundry, where a stubby ore carrier from Lake Superior was likely to be unloading; in the other direction lay the tannery with the fine, freshly painted home of the town's rich man not far away; then there was the railroad machine shop where men with great, clanging hammers worked upon the puffing engines and freight cars which bore the logs from the still wooded hinterland,—the Boyne City, Gaylord and Alpena Railroad. For many years Barney had longed, mutely, for the marvel of a ride upon one of these trains whenever Azen Mabo took him into Boyne on the rough, homemade farm wagon to restock the family store of flour, sugar and kerosene.

Azen bought in Boyne; but he never sold there. For Charlevoix, at the western end of Pine Lake, where

is the channel through to the big lake, was always the selling market for the Indians; there were the great summer hotels and square after square of cottages filling each spring with the rich, reckless strangers from distant cities who could be counted upon to buy, at good prices, the bark canoes, the sweet-grass baskets and the porcupine quill boxes which Azen and his squaw and Barney manufactured in the long winter evenings. In Charlevoix, too, the boarding houses paid the best prices for the huckleberries, the wild raspberries and blackberries which Barney found in the woods. It was a ten-mile walk for Barney, carrying his berries; but you got a quarter for two quarts, and Azen seldom asked for any accounting of the money when Barney picked of his own accord and toted to town; occasionally, it is true, Azen made demands; for Charlevoix was wet in those days, and Azen liked to get dead drunk about six times a year; but in between he was entirely sober and very religious and kind. He could read and write both Chippewa and English, whenever he had occasion to; and he possessed Bibles printed in both languages. He spoke, in addition to Chippewa, careful, accurate, school-taught English and was able to help Barney with sixth-grade arithmetic. His wife spoke hardly any English at all, and she had no faith in the white, starch-collared doctor whom Azen summoned, in trembling panic, when his own little boy and baby girl both got so sick; she went out into the woods and gathered herbs of her own which she administered; wherefore the boy died, but the little girl pulled through.

Barney never remembered himself being sick; he could always do his work in Azen's five-acre clearing of beans and corn; when he was twelve, he was worth

two thirds man's wages from the white farmers; and rarely indeed did he miss a day in winter, making the two-mile walk to the small, white schoolhouse on the Charlevoix road. It had one room, with blackboards all about, where a white lady taught fourteen or fifteen children usually,—sometimes eight white and six Indian, but occasionally more Indian than white. The children might be in five or six or even in eight "grades" which made the task difficult for the teacher, but rendered the day most fascinating to a boy eager to learn everything in the world all at once.

It was that teacher, who was always very kind to him, who inspired Barney to go to Boyne high school and work his way through the course, so that he actually was ready for college when the war came. And Barney had determined to go to the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor. Not alone his conscious will to make something of himself and the natural vigor of his mind and body combined in forming this determination; something deeper within him, and less definable, seemed ever to drive him. So far as this force associated itself with anything tangible, it was bound up with his ring,—that old, stately, formal band of gold which was his inheritance. A man of his blood and brain went to college, it seemed to say; a man of his blood went to war without waiting to be called, or without delaying for the decision of his country. So in 1914 Barney left Boyne for Montreal and embarked upon the enormous adventure and education of the war. Four years in France and England — fighting, resting, recuperating and fighting again in the company of the most gallant gentlemen the world has ever seen — made Barney over; endowed him with manners, customs, habits of thought of the gentleman as

well as of the soldier. These were his now, a part of him to endure as long as he lived; yet now that he was again in America and the war was over, there returned to him the sensations of the boy of the Indian shack and of Boyne when he found himself ascending the steps of the big, fashionable house on Scott Street.

A manservant admitted him, and when the man indicated that he had been expected, Barney gave him his cap and let him take his coat quite properly; he followed the man into a drawing-room where the servant pressed a button which lighted several pairs of candle-bulbs in brackets about the walls and which spread soft illumination through the room; he switched on the lights in a large, shaded lamp upon a table near the center and left Barney to await his friend.

Nothing in his experience had approximated the relation so quickly and so extraordinarily established with her after their first words together at the station at Escanaba. Only the evening before, when he first noticed her on the train, he had watched this fair, slight stranger a good deal, much as the little boy in the Indian wagon had observed the beautiful, daintily dressed girls who came to Charlevoix in summer. He had not imagined that he might even meet her; and now, wonderfully, they had become friends. More than friends, indeed; for something beyond both of them, and out of their control, had set them together in a relation which had no parallel. He thought of how he had told her, in the first hours of their acquaintance, intimacies of his life which he had never before mentioned, and how she, in turn, had shared with him her closest concerns; he thought of how she had gone to the Rock for him the morning that she had believed him killed,

and how she had put her hands upon him and clung to him when she had discovered that he lived.

Barney arose from the chair in which he had been sitting and walked impatiently to the hall. Was she not coming, now that he was here? He put his hand upon her letters in his pocket to reassure himself that she had wanted him to come.

Ethel, upon the floor above, had been ready for many minutes; indeed, she had been ready when, from the front window of the room which had been Agnes's, she had seen Barney approaching the house; but she had waited for the servant to tell her that Mr. Loustrelle had come and then, amazingly, a tremor had attacked her when she reached the head of the stairs. So she retreated to her room and dallied there unwillingly, indignant at herself for this senseless hesitation before going downstairs. No one now in the world was as close to her — so she had considered many times during these last, lonely days — as this new friend; she had been looking forward eagerly to his arrival, arranging all plans to include him in what she had to do; and she had a very great deal to tell him and discuss with him. She should, therefore, descend at once in a friendly and businesslike manner and greet him; but,— he was a man and she a girl. The sight of his strong, vigorous figure striding toward her had stirred a flutter in her breast which no amount of argument with self could quiet.

She had heard his voice, too; just in a word or so to the manservant, and it had more confused that flutter. When she went first from the head of the stairs to her room, it was to see herself again in her glass; the second time she so retreated it was to gaze once more at the picture of him in the group photo-

graph which cousin Agnes had ordered. The puzzle of the presence of that picture among cousin Agnes's things had agitated her so greatly since its discovery that her impulse to take the picture at once to him almost controlled her; but she left it in her room and, at last, descended.

After a woman and man have met and known the wonder of mutual attraction and have separated, there is likely to be a dangerous process of idealization in progress of which one may become suddenly aware just before the moment of rejoining the other. Ethel was suffering this experience; she had reached the lower hall beside the lighted room where Barney was and, halting again with a catch at her heart, she felt fright at her own memories. Were they true ones,—those images which she had borne of his straight, strong, pleasing figure and of his good features, of his observant, understanding, likable eyes, of his steady lips which smiled so pleasantly, of his well-formed, firm hands which had held hers in their grasp? Or was he, when she should see him here, just like other men?

She stepped between the hangings at the door of the drawing-room and saw him; and the welling in her breast let her know that he had nothing to fear of disillusionment. But how was he finding her? For he, too, had been dreaming and idealizing; she saw that in his eyes meeting hers for their moment and then going to her brow, her lips, her arms and bosom, her dress and her slippers. He, too, had been bearing images; and she watched him with mighty dismay while he looked to see if he was to be disillusioned. And he was not! He had seen her before only in the suit which she had worn constantly at St. Florentin; now she had on an afternoon dress; and after witnessing the white-

ness of her throat and arms, his eyes returned to her and told her that he liked her as much, perhaps, as he had dreamt.

"Miss Carew!" he spoke her name.

"I'm so glad you're here!" she said. "Oh, I'm so glad!"

It was what she was feeling, not at all what she had intended to say; but then he had not said what he had planned.

"I wanted to come to you long ago," he confessed in return. "I've thought of coming every hour since you left, Miss Carew; when you wired yesterday and said I might come—" he halted.

"I wanted to wire you before," Ethel admitted. "But it was only yesterday it seemed I had the right to have you come."

She had planned, when she was upstairs, how she would shake hands with him; she had imagined the touch of his fingers on hers, but now neither had offered hand to the other. "Shan't we sit down?" she said. "No one will come to the front of the house unless we know it; we can talk here, Mr. Loutrelle."

She remembered that she had a very great deal to say to this man, and it was important for him to know much of it at once; she had had a "right" to send for him, not for the satisfaction of seeing him, but to tell him what she had discovered. "A great deal has happened here," she said.

"Not much up there," he replied, "except that I'm sure that Kincheloe is gone as well as your grandfather and grandmother. Kincheloe's wife is alone there with the Indians. It was a great relief to me, Miss Carew, when you let me know you had come here," he said, returning from their business to herself.

"You worried about my thirty-five dollars?"

"Some," he admitted, "until I knew you were where you were known."

"Well, except for carfare and a few lunches and small personal expenses, I've it all yet," she reported. "You see, Mrs. Wain won't let me pay anything; I'm a guest of cousin Agnes, she says. If I really needed money, she's several thousand yet in a balance which cousin Agnes left with her, which she'd give me. She's offered already; and besides, I'm positively refusing money these days, Mr. Loutrelle," she talked on in the delight of realizing his companionship again. She sat down in a chair near the table, and he sat near her. "My uncles, both of them, simply insist that I take their money now; I believe uncle Lucas has actually wired to have fifty thousand deposited to my account in the bank at Sheridan."

"Fifty thousand!" Barney repeated.

Ethel nodded. Fifty thousand had not been an unusual amount for her father to have had on deposit, and it was customary for her uncles to have more than that at call. She had not thought, in mentioning it, that Barney Loutrelle had probably not expended fifty hundred dollars in all his life; and this shocked her back to their business together. Before she had met this man whose whole estate consisted of his uniform, of the ring which he had shown her, and what now remained of his hundred and twenty dollars her uncles had been very far from the mood in which they wired money to her account at Sheridan. She had recognized that her finding Barney at St. Florentin and the event which seemed to be the consequence of his presence had wrought this change for her; and she had been thinking of that money as paid for hushing her knowl-

edge of the crime committed. But before any one had been killed at the Rock, her grandfather had offered her money to tell him all she knew about Barney Loutrelle. Her uncle had not asked her for that information so directly; uncle Lucas did not do things directly; but she was sure that he had given that money for the purpose of learning more from her about Barney. About what events connected with him particularly? About his life with Azen Mabo? About his ring? About the fact that cousin Agnes had a group which included him? These bewildered speculations ran through Ethel's mind as she watched Loutrelle.

"I'm not touching uncle Lucas's money, of course," she said. "He has told me that the family is protecting father's investments which I told you about. I can't stop that; I don't think I would if I could. It will save father's friends, and uncle Lucas won't lose in the end. But I'll not have his money. I found out that James Quinlan, who was mentioned in that letter, had been in grandfather's employ and — you had that letter?" she interrupted herself, "where I told about it and his having lost his fingers from his right hand?"

"That crossed mine," Barney said, "in which I was so sure that the fellow with a short right mitten probably had no connection with our affair. Of course, I don't think that now. The coincidence would be too much."

"It wasn't a coincidence. Two days ago and yesterday I found out a good deal more about James Quinlan. My cousin had told me that he used to work for grandfather as long ago as when grandfather lived in the lumber camps."

"Yes; your letter said that."

"Bennet told me that Quinlan was a privileged character; and he had a grandson Robert — who must be the Robert that father means, Mr. Loutrelle."

"Yes."

"Robert Quinlan was killed last summer. The old man had been wrapped up in him and afterwards he went sort of queer, and he disappeared late in December. I wrote you, I think, that the landlady could tell me nothing more about him; but day before yesterday, when I went to 57th Street to see if, by any chance, any one else might know more, the landlady told me that a Mrs. Monahan, who lives over by Garfield Park, had been asking about him recently. So I went to the West Side and found that Mrs. Monahan was a woman about forty-five years old who was the sister of the wife of Quinlan's son. She told me that Quinlan, whose wife died many years ago, had one son also named James; and this James Quinlan and his wife — Mrs. Monahan's sister — both were lost in the Iroquois Theatre fire here in Chicago in 1903. They left the boy, Bob, she called him. She had Bob part of the time; then the old man wanted him, so Bob lived with him till he went to war. Bob was shot down in flames; he was burned in the air. She said that fact, following the death of Bob's father and mother, shook the old man's mind. She hadn't seen much of him since Bob's death because the sight of any one connected with Bob excited him too much; but she'd worried about him a lot, particularly after she'd found out just recently that he'd left his boarding place and gone without giving an address. She wanted to know what I know about him."

"What did you tell her?" Barney asked when Ethel hesitated.

"I said I was a Cullen and of course concerned about him. I don't know how well that satisfied her but she's the sort that likes to talk, so she mentioned several significant things. It seemed that when her sister married James, the son, the father was very well off; they traveled in Europe; she showed me some of the things her sister sent from abroad. She said the old man made a lot of money once in Michigan; but he spent it all in a few years; then he got some more money; and spent that. It seemed rather queer to me after the way Bennet, my cousin, had spoken of James Quinlan as an employee — a sawyer who'd lost his fingers in the mill. Other things were strange which are harder to describe, Mr. Loutrelle — like the chest of silver my grandfather gave young James Quinlan when he married and the porringer and mug and spoon he gave the boy, Robert. Mrs. Monahan showed them to me. It was like my grandfather to give things; he used to make gifts for policy. But I wondered what 'policy' he had to follow with old James Quinlan; I mean I wondered what James Quinlan knew about grandfather," Ethel said directly. "For that is what the letter from Huston Adley must mean. What do you think about it, Mr. Loutrelle?"

"What do you?" Barney returned.

She smiled. "You answer like Asa Redbird."

"I've been with Asa most of the last days."

"Yes. You did not write me what you thought after you went out to the Rock; you said you found things just as I said they would be. But what did you think from them?"

"I thought that you were correct in believing that somebody was killed there," Barney said quietly.

"By Kincheloe," Ethel continued, quivering a little,

"either at grandfather's order, or else as a result of bungling something which grandfather wanted him to do; that, I'd rather believe."

"That's what I think," Barney added quietly.

"Do you honestly? Well," Ethel continued, "we know the one who was killed was Quinlan. For about forty-five years ago, Mr. Loutrelle — maybe it was a little earlier and maybe it wasn't quite so long ago — something happened in the woods in Michigan. I think it gave Quinlan, who was a sawyer for grandfather, a certain power over him — so far as I can see — grandfather felt it at different times. I think — and I'm talking out to you what I think as I've never done with any one else, Mr. Loutrelle — that power accounts for the Quinlans' trips to Europe; grandfather gave them money to get them out of the way. Also the gifts. Then there must have been times when my people were not so afraid of Quinlan; at least they didn't give him so much money but only treated him like a privileged employee. But about the time that you started for St. Florentin — about the time that my father was trying to tell you to find Resurrection Rock — Quinlan changed and became dangerous to my family. That night at St. Florentin, when I saw grandfather going about his house in the dark with his rifle under his arm, it was for fear of Quinlan coming to find him. For my uncle had learned that Quinlan was missing here; he had gone there. So my uncle warned grandfather, and Kincheloe went out after a fox and came back and told grandfather that Quinlan was dead and would never trouble him any more, for he had killed him and put him into the lake."

She arose from her chair and stood before it, gazing

at Barney. She thought of Bennet's rage at her for associating with an unknown, a stranger — a "pick up" — in her contest against her own family; but no fear or distrust of him came to her. He rose also, quivering a little as she was shaking and, as she stood up, her eyes, resting on his, followed him up so that whereas she had been gazing down at him a moment ago, now she looked up at him unwaveringly.

"Something had happened inside James Quinlan after Robert was shot down in flames which probably made it impossible for my uncle, who had taken grandfather's place here, to keep on controlling Quinlan in the old way," she said. "Whatever it was, it made Quinlan want to go to Resurrection Rock; I don't know whether he went there to find you. I can't quite see how that could be, but he certainly went there; and grandfather was afraid of his seeing you. That's quite clear. Grandfather was afraid, too, I think, of Quinlan coming to him. But Quinlan doesn't seem to have gone to St. Florentin at all; he went to Resurrection Rock; and Kincheloe found him there and killed him so that he could never speak to you. But Kincheloe couldn't kill my father who before that time — several days before — was trying to get word to me to find Quinlan; for my father was already dead; and — and —" she stopped. "I've reasoned that out rightly, Mr. Loutrelle? Or what do you think?"

"I haven't been able to see how Quinlan — or whoever was killed at the Rock — went there expecting me," Barney said. "I went there, as you know, on a sort of wild chance."

"But Bagley, who was there, was expecting you."

"Yes. This Marcellus Clarke had written him that I would come. But how did Clarke know? From

some sort of message from your father, too, do you think?"

"No, I think Bagley's business at the Rock was simply a part of a plan of waiting for some one which has been going on for a good many years — and which father had nothing to do with when he was living, surely, and which I can't believe he has anything to do with now."

She saw Barney catch his breath quickly and she knew of what he was thinking. Had the vigil upon the Rock of which she had told him, and which went back to the years before the building of the house when Halford and his uncommunicative alternate kept watch in the old cabin on Resurrection Isle, been a plan of waiting for the boy who called himself Barney Loutrelle?

"Your ring," Ethel recalled to herself suddenly. "And the device carved on the mantel in that room." She did not need to mention what room; he was thinking of it, too.

"Yes?" he said, raising his head.

"They seemed very alike to me, I told you," Ethel said, "the devices on each."

"Yes."

"Wasn't it — like?"

"Yes, Miss Carew."

"Not more than like?"

"They were identical, Miss Carew," he said with a sudden emphasis which betrayed to her something of what he had pent up within. His hand went to his pocket where he kept his ring, and he took out the little chamois bag, in which he preserved it, and held the small band of old, scrolled gold upon his palm. The pattern of the working followed no easily described

form, such as figures or fleur-de-lis, yet ran around the ring in a perfectly definite device of curves and points, peculiar and distinct.

"The carving in stone was larger, of course," Barney pronounced. "But identical; absolutely identical." And he looked up again at her.

"Yes," Ethel said. "Yes; I thought so."

He closed his hand in a spasm of emotion which he sought to control by turning away and walking to the other end of the room. "It was there," he said almost inaudibly. "I saw it."

For a moment more Ethel stood dulled with feeling for him,—for this boy from the Indian shack in the Charlevoix woods finding, at last, something which traced to his ring and to himself. Then her thought went to that photograph upstairs; since its discovery, she had prepared several ways of bringing it to him, but now she did something quite unplanned.

Five or six years ago, Oliver had had a portrait of Agnes painted; it was hanging in the music room just beyond the drawing-room; and Ethel went there and turned on the lights.

"Mr. Loutrelle," she summoned Barney. "Did you ever meet her?"

He had put away his ring and had quite regained possession of himself; he gazed at the beautiful portrait admiringly at once but without any sign of recognition.

"She's rather a wonder, isn't she?" he turned to Ethel and then back to the portrait, in his interest. "Who is she?"

"Did you ever meet her?" Ethel persisted.

Barney shifted his position slightly to view the picture in a different light.

"Oh! Was she in France?"

"Several times and most of the time during the war," Ethel said and, watching Barney, she saw color deepening in his face.

"There was a woman," he said after a minute, "who visited our battalion in rest billets two years ago, when I was still with the Canadians, Miss Carew. She was an American; I've forgotten her name; but I'll never forget her. She had a hospital, I heard, which she had built and kept up at her own expense near Boulogne; several hundred beds."

"Yes," Ethel said. "Go on."

"You mean this is she?"

"What about her when you met her?" Ethel demanded. "What did she do?"

"Why, I can't tell you, Miss Carew; she just was with us that night, going about and talking to us — each man a few minutes. It is a thing you don't think particularly about at the time — and never forget."

"Her name," Ethel said quietly, "was Mrs. Oliver Cullen; she was my cousin Agnes, by marriage. I told you about her when I told you about all our family; she owned this house. She was lost last September on the *Gallantic*."

"She was that woman?"

"Cousin Agnes contributed a field hospital near Boulogne, among many other things she did in the war, Mr. Loutrelle; and if you ever met her, I'm sure you'd never forget her."

"But what made you think I might have met her?"

Ethel left him in the music room while she went upstairs and returned with the photograph of the group of officers which she gave to him with the mere statement that she had found it among her cousin's things.

He examined it with quick interest, recognizing several of the other men before he observed that he, himself, was in the group.

"Some one was always snapping about," he said, in explanation of his forgetfulness of the particular occasion when this picture was taken. "That must have been taken last spring when we were near Amiens. That's Billy Howard and there is Gordon Fould, both from Chicago, I think; or from Illinois, anyway," he pointed to two young men in the picture. "Billy was killed in the Argonne.—I suppose your cousin knew them or some of the others?"

Ethel did not say that she had supposed that cousin Agnes might have known him; for now the probability of that seemed slight indeed. He had not even suggested it, and as she watched him, she could not tell whether the thought of any unusual interest on the part of Mrs. Oliver Cullen was in his mind. He gave back the photograph but remained several moments longer before the portrait, and when he returned with Ethel to the drawing-room, he commented upon her again. "I don't think I ever saw a finer face. So this was her house." And it seemed to Ethel that he gazed about the big room with new appreciation of the taste in its decoration and furnishing.

Ethel offered nothing more about her cousin Agnes when they sat down; she went over with him in detail everything she had done since leaving him, including her call of that afternoon at Mrs. Davol's where, she reported, she had made an appointment for a sitting that evening. She lost all account of time during this talk so that she heard a servant opening the front door and admitting some one before she realized that this was the hour at which Bennet dropped in to scold

and argue with her before going home from the office.

"Hello!" he called before him, coming into the drawing-room; then, seeing Barney, he squared about challengingly.

Ethel guessed from Bennet's wilting, when Barney stood and remained observing him quietly, that Bennet had first assumed that the stranger was her offensive "pick-up" friend, but that closer scrutiny made that at least doubtful. "Well, Ethel," he turned about uncomfortably, "I didn't mean to intrude —"

"Oh, I expected you," Ethel said, her heart pulsing hotly. "Mr. Loutrelle, this is my cousin Bennet Cul-len."

"Loutrelle!" Bennet repeated, facing about to Barney again. "So you are Loutrelle!"

The exclamation was so insulting that Ethel rejoiced that Barney offered no reply; he had inclined his head slightly when Ethel had introduced Bennet, and he had stepped forward a little, halting when Bennet thus repulsed him. Her impulse was to interfere in his defense; but Barney glanced quickly at her, and she realized that he, who had made himself from a boy in an Indian shack into an officer who had commanded men during years of war, was used to handling difficult and embarrassing situations for himself.

"What do you want here?" Bennet was demanding.

"Miss Carew knows why I am here," Barney replied quietly.

"I'll ask you to tell me!" Bennet attempted to command. Bennet — Ethel saw — did not know how to command Barney; but Barney knew how to control Bennet.

"That's no use," Barney said, shaking his head slightly.

It was no use; and Bennet was alert-minded enough to recognize it. He had come in with his preconceived notion of the man whom Ethel had met on the train; and in his moment of astonishment at seeing Barney, he had not been able to temper his address to this very different sort of man. So Bennet stood in silence, angry at himself and at Ethel as well as at Barney. He had clenched his hands in his anger. Barney's hands had not closed at all; nor had Barney's color perceptibly altered, nor was his voice raised.

"Miss Carew has told me enough about her talks with you," Barney said to Bennet, "so that I understand that you and I are not likely to see many things from the same point of view."

"I think not," Bennet said. "No, I should say not, if you are the cause of her thinking that my grandfather —"

"Stop!" Barney warned quickly; and Bennet obeyed, more furious at himself for obeying until he realized that Barney was aware that the man who had admitted Bennet was still delaying in the rear hall. In the silence, they heard a door softly open and close; but Bennet went into the hall to make sure that no one was about. He returned still wrathful but also a little ashamed of himself. This Loutrelle not only was a different sort from expectations, but clearly he was not recklessly determined on trouble.

"Miss Carew and I had the advantage of being on the spot where something happened," Barney continued. "You can keep on saying that she's crazy and that I am, if you want to; or you can help us to

make out what happened and show us that it was something different from what we think — if you can. Your cousin surely would like to think of it differently, if she could. I would; I've no object whatever in wanting to believe that something happened up there that didn't. Do you think I have?"

"I don't know!" Bennet blustered. "I haven't thought much about you. What do I know about you, anyway?"

"I'm willing for you, and for all your family to know everything about my connection with this affair. In fact, I want you to," Barney said. "Before you came, I was wondering what would be the best way to tell it to you — your people, I mean, and Miss Carew's. For, you see, in order to protect me — she thought it was protecting me — your cousin has been putting herself in a false position with you all; or at least in a very hard one, which others are pretty sure to misunderstand. So since I am in town now and expect to see her often — in fact, I'm taking her out this evening — I want you all to know exactly what we are doing and why."

This caught Ethel scarcely less aghast than it did Bennet; but she saw that Barney meant it, and the next instant after her surprise, she realized the good sense in him. He was not undertaking the task of himself further informing Bennet; he now asked her to do it. He would go away and return for her after supper.

So, during the next hour while their delayed dinner waited, Ethel patched out her previous account to Bennet of the happenings at St. Florentin with a statement of the circumstances which preceded her meeting with Barney. Of course, she did not repeat the merely personal details of Barney's early life which he

had related to her; but she told of his search for his own people; of his experience with the Adleys in London; of the apparent attempt of her own father to communicate with him or with her through him; and she showed Bennet her letter received here on Seaside Street.

During the first half of the hour, Bennet, of course, called her crazy over and over again; then — very likely indeed to his grandfather — he became, not less contemptuous, but more interested. He cross-questioned her; he tried to make Ethel contradict herself; he examined the envelope and postmark of Ethel's letter from Huntington Adley; he again pronounced the entire affair a lunatic's hoax and then determined to accompany her cousin and Barney to the sitting with Mrs. Davol that night.

So he stayed to dinner; and when Barney returned, Bennet knew almost everything which Ethel did, except the fact that their cousin Agnes had had three prints of a group photograph which portrayed Barney Loutrelle and the additional amazing fact, which had come to Ethel's own consciousness only during the process of Bennet's cross-questioning of her. This fact was that the great, old room in the new house on Resurrection Rock had been, once, the salon in the ancient wing of the château of Chenontresor, which for four hundred years had been in the family of Hilaire de Chenal whom her aunt Cecilia had married.

The recollection of that ancient room, visited by Ethel when she was a child, had come to her with the indubitable clearness with which, in moments of intensity, remembrances may return; and in connection with it, she now was aware that several years ago her uncle Hilaire, having gambled too recklessly and hav-

ing exhausted the money which her grandfather had supplied, had sold Chenontresor.

This fact was so certain to her and yet so astounding and so completely without meaning, that she did not confide it even to Barney. Later on, she knew she would; but to-night she kept it her own secret while, with Barney and her cousin Bennet — and followed by the man whom her grandfather had hired to watch her — she went to the house of the medium Davol to speak to and hear from her father, who was dead, and from whomsoever else among the dead had anything to say to Barney or to herself.

CHAPTER XV

A FLAMING TORCH

THE house of the medium stood in a section some small distance north of the river, where the rebuilders of the seventies imagined that the fashionable residence district would endure. With the lesson of the great fire bitterly learned, they reared their mansions of brick and stone and tile, with brick foundations and solid interior walls; stone copings distinguished their façades; window and door sills were stone, ponderously laid; their rails were iron, secured against destruction. They built for a century of occupancy and when, after a generation, the owners began to desert for the more fashionable districts farther north and east, they abandoned dwellings altogether too substantial to be torn down or even to be greatly remodeled; so into the residences, bakers and candymakers, dry cleaners, tailors, hairdressers, masseurs and chiropodists came. Many of the old homes became boarding houses; here and there an old family — impoverished or stubborn — clung to its hearth with the result of making the neighborhood more hopelessly nondescript. It was near the middle of one of the most mixed and tawdry of these blocks that the medium Davol practiced her profession in gloomy, mustily furnished rooms where congregated many who sought communication with the world beyond and where — as many believed — souls of the dead visited and spoke.

The place had repelled Ethel; the personality of the medium had offended her, even at the visit which she had made during the afternoon. What an idea, Ethel thought, as she sought out the house from the business places of hairdressers and chiropodists, to suppose that her father would come to speak to her in such a house as he would never have appointed for a meeting place in his life. And how could it be that such an individual as Mrs. Davol was necessary for so sacred and solemn a function as communion between the soul of father and daughter?

It was not that Mrs. Davol was a common and obviously uncultured woman. Ethel had many acquaintances among the so-called common and little educated whom she respected and liked; nor was it that Mrs. Davol was actually unpleasant. She simply was an ordinary, middle-aged woman, a little too fat — an indolent looking person, except for her eyes, which were brown and sparkling and by their activity emphasized the sloth of Mrs. Davol's round body. If Ethel had found her employed in the bakery at the corner or at the shampoo parlors, she would have accepted her without particular consideration as agreeable enough in her place; but as an ambassador to the dead,— well, Ethel had imagined that such duty required quite a different sort of a person.

Yet Ethel's inquiries had brought her assurance that Mrs. Davol was very successful; and the medium herself was calmly confident and matter-of-fact about her abilities.

"I don't guarantee results, dearie," she said. "But I may say I near always get them. Not right off, of course; sometimes it takes time. Eva's a good girl; but she has her ways; and likely she has troubles of

her own we can't know about. But she usually goes for something."

"Eva," as Mrs. Davol explained, was her "control"; for Mrs. Davol was a medium who preferred to work chiefly through the trance; and in the trance, she became subject to a secondary personality, supposed to be a spirit, who was called in spiritualistic parlance the "control" or "guide." Eva's duties were not only to take charge of Mrs. Davol's speech during the trance but to summon and lead up the spirits of the people who might be asked for by the sitters at the séance.

Ethel explained this detail of the mechanism of communication while Bennet, Barney and she drove to Mrs. Davol's in Bennet's car. Barney, having attended sittings in England, was of course familiar with the ordinary methods; but Bennet was almost wholly ignorant of the subject. Half with amusement, half with disgust, he observed the deterioration of the neighborhood through which they drove; and when at last he located the number in the illumined transoms above Mrs. Davol's door, he locked his car with elaborate care before abandoning it and accompanying his cousin and Loutrelle up the steps.

A colored maid admitted them and led into a large plainly furnished room on the first floor and at the middle of the house. The windows which faced the street evidently belonged to the room in front which was separated from this by closed doors. The single window of this room, from its position, plainly faced only an airshaft. Its shade and curtains were drawn; the door on the other side of the room was closed, and no sounds were to be heard either from other parts of the house or from the street. The room was soft

lighted by two large lamps shaded in red; there were two tables, one an ordinary, large library table, the other three-legged and small and light. A number of chairs were arranged in a rough circle about a big leather, reclining chair with comfortably upholstered arms and back. Evidently this was the séance room. "Will you all be seated?" the maid invited and departed.

Ethel remained standing, and Barney and her cousin did likewise. She had not seen this room when she had called in the afternoon, and the solemnity of the place affected her more than she had expected. Here in these chairs often had sat serious, grief-stricken mothers and fathers, wives and husbands, sons and daughters, seeking as she had come to seek, some word from their dead. Many other visitors came lightly, perhaps, without any inclination toward belief, but solely to amuse themselves or to condemn and disprove. Bennet illustrated their attitude to her by picking up the three-legged table and tossing it into the air:

"This is for the spooks to kick around, I suppose."

Mrs. Davol entered rather ponderously and spoke to Ethel.

The medium wore a plain, gray, woollen dress which closely fitted the ample lines of her figure. Ethel noticed that Mrs. Davol wore no corset; her sleeves fitted her arms and were tight at the wrist; her hands were ringless. Ethel was conscious of making this examination of the medium's person as though inspecting a prestidigitator before a performance; and Mrs. Davol, conscious of the scrutiny, said agreeably:

"Lookin' for levers and wire-hooks, dearie? Well, I don't use 'em at all. No need to, even when I work

with the table or get raps. I do do that," she explained, glancing toward the three-legged table, "but only when the sitter prefers. I like better the straight talk in the trance; do you, Miss Harris?"

"Yes, please," Ethel said.

She had given the name Miss Harris instead of her own when she called in the afternoon; and Mrs. Davol said she was glad of that. She preferred not to know the names of her callers, and so she now desired no introductions to Ethel's companions.

"These your friends?" was all she inquired and, when Ethel replied, Mrs. Davol pointed to seats close together while she herself took the large, leather chair near the center of the room. She had closed the hall door behind her, and the four sat silent in the glow of the pink-shaded lamps.

"Sometimes, just before Eva comes, I'm clairvoyant; I see things pretty clear"; Mrs. Davol volunteered. "When I do, of course, I'll tell you what I see."

Strangely the presence of the medium, instead of intensifying for Ethel the solemnity of the room, had dispelled it; Mrs. Davol, lounging in the shaded red light, appeared only an over-fed, vulgar person, poorly playing a part as her head drooped back and her eyes, half open under their heavy lids, gazed dreamily at Barney and Bennet and Ethel.

"I feel a lot of force here, Miss Harris," the medium said.

"She ought to feel the police force," Bennet whispered derisively to Ethel, who made no reply while she watched Barney who had supplied himself with a pad and pencil, which he now took from his pocket, ready to record what would be said.

"I think sure we'll get something," Mrs. Davol continued. "I see — I see a woman, very beautiful. She is a fine woman, much loved by many; she has helped many. She is no longer young; she is middle-aged; she — now I see water; I see a lot of water and people swimming; she is in the water; she is drowning; she is trying to swim. I see a great ship sinking. I think it is a steamer; it is going down. Yes; it is a steamer. I can see its name painted, but I cannot make out the letters. I see many people in the water; but now I do not see her."

The voice of the medium halted, and Barney filled in, from memory, the gaps of unimportant words when the medium spoke too fast for his pencil to follow.

"I see — I see," Bennet whispered in Ethel's ear, mocking the voice of the medium, "some one shagging you back to Scott Street after your call here this afternoon and then going to the newspapers to get up a few facts on cousin Agnes!"

"Listen!" Ethel begged. "Please!" But her own feelings were almost like his.

"I still see water," continued Mrs. Davol, "but not the same water; this is smooth and blue and very clear. Ice floats in it. I can see down through the clear, cold water to the stones and sand and little fishes swimming. I see trees on the shore and a girl in a cloak walking under the trees. She bears a burden beneath her coat. — Now I see her more clearly — the burden she bears is a child — unborn — she is big with child — lonely, very weak — she stumbles and is afraid — she looks upon the water and seems to think to cast herself in — but now some one appears in a boat — paddling — it is a canoe —"

Again the voice of the medium halted; and now,

though the description recalled nothing to Ethel's mind, yet the manner of this recital of vision lessened Ethel's feeling of fraud in the performance and served to keep Bennet silent.

"Does that mean something to any one here?" the clairvoyant asked.

Neither Barney or Bennet replied and, after a moment, Ethel said, "No."

"Maybe you don't know it does," Mrs. Davol objected; and suddenly she thrust herself back in her chair and at her next words, her voice marvellously altered. Indeed, the change in the voice was so great that it seemed less a change in the same voice than a substitution of a strange tone, younger, higher in pitch and far more vigorous than the natural voice of Mrs. Davol.

"There is some one here with much difficulty," this new voice said. "Not well built up; quite old; no figure; only an outline; he has not learnt how to build up as yet," the voice continued, and now the medium sat straighter, and not only her voice, but her attitude and the slightest movements of her hands took on quite another manner. "He has not been over long; a very short time; he is not built up clearly at all; but he tries to speak. He wants very hard to speak. He is with two others, both much younger. Eva has seen one of them before; Eva feels one of them was waiting for him, the old man not well built up. He had a long, troubled life, and when he passed over, required much rest; but he has roused from it to try to meet you; but it is too soon — he wants to say — but cannot —" The voice trailed off into murmurs, unintelligible and then inaudible.

"I suppose," said Bennet, leaning again to Ethel's

ear, "this is the trance; she's under her 'control.' Eva has come; little Eva spoke that piece."

"Yes," said Ethel. "Do you know who she means?"

"From that?" Bennet returned in disgust.

"Can you describe the man better now?" Barney inquired of the medium, writing his own question as he had recorded the others.

"He shows me a capital O," the voice of "Eva" continued strongly and distinctly. "Now a J with it; the J is before the O; J O."

"Can you give the next letter now?" Bennet inquired, in imitation of Barney's question.

"There is no next letter," the voice replied. "He builds up no more letters; but he makes the O clearer; it is not an O; it is a Q."

"Q?" Bennet challenged.

The voice did not reply directly. "Eva feels like a blow in the breast; there is gushing from it. He does not know he is giving this. He has not done it on purpose; they have tried to make him forget that; but Eva gets it from him. 'I am happy,' he says. 'It is true, I am happy.' He can say that; but that is all now. He holds up in his hand a torch—a flaming torch. Associated with the torch is the word Galilee. The younger man leads him away." The voice again ceased.

Ethel gazed at Barney who had stopped writing and turned to her but made no comment; Bennet waited silently; and Ethel knew that to both of them the reference to James Quinlan was as clear as to herself; not merely because the letter which he "built up" made his initials, but because of the apparent reference to her letter from London where Quinlan was told he

would be happy. Yet, of course, the reference was not clear; and if it were, it might somehow have been gathered only from their own minds; might it not? They all had been thinking James Quinlan here in this room. But they had not been thinking about a flaming torch and "Galilee." At least Ethel had not; nor had Barney, for she now asked him; nor had Bennet.

"Does that 'Galilee' and torch stuff mean anything to you?" Bennet demanded of her.

She shook her head to tell him that it did not as the medium began to speak again.

"Some one stands behind you," she said to Ethel, and Ethel turned about, startled.

The medium was in a trance so true that no longer the fear of conscious fraud distressed Ethel. Mrs. Davol's eyes were open and she sat upright, looking about, and she continued the slight, quick gestures of her hands which had become characteristic since the control took charge. When she informed them that some one stood behind Ethel, it was spoken so calmly and as a matter of obvious determination that Ethel looking about, expected to see some one there.

No one was there, as Bennet too saw by turning about. Barney did not look around but kept his eyes upon the medium.

"He puts his arms out to you," the voice continued. "He came over here suddenly with much undone. He has been watching many people who have come over lately to see what they would do. He steps nearer; his hand is almost upon you."

"Whose?" Ethel cried, bending forward. "Who do you see?"

"One who loved you much; he is tall; middle-aged; he smiles lovingly. He has brown hair; blue eyes;

good features. He might be your father. Yes; he nods his head. He says he is your father. His hair is not brown; it is lighter than brown. Eva cannot see his face very clearly. He has been trying to come to you many times before; but there have been difficulties. Once he almost got through to you. It was in a dream, Eva thinks. Yes; he nods. It was in a dream, but when you woke up you forgot. It is arranged so; when one visits so, one does not remember. He has much to say to you —" The voice trailed off and stopped.

"What did he want to *say*?" Ethel demanded again.

"He says, 'Tell her of my love; tell her it keeps right on. Tell her I know and see and am satisfied. Tell her I am happier now.'"

"What did he want to *say*?" Ethel demanded again, when this meaningless talk ceased.

"He builds up something; a letter," the voice continued. "The letter L."

"What does that mean?"

"It is his name; no, he shakes his head. It is not his name. The name of some one else; no, again he shakes his head. It is the name of a place; a city where something has happened."

"London?" Ethel put in again.

"Yes; London. He says also it is the name of a person; he wants Eva to correct that; it is the name of a person too."

"What about that person?"

"He says important events will come; he wants to say, they are happening now with L. Observe and have patience; that is the difference from before; things are happening of themselves without interference. Now he is going. I'm off. He can't say good-

by. Another is present; some one here has been thinking about him; not consciously; but wishing him all the while underneath. He is a brown-faced man with straight, black hair; an Indian —"

Ethel sat back, relaxed from the tension of the minute before, dulled, baffled and disappointed. She had been told that the spirit of her father had been in the room; she had been told that he had held his hands out to her; that he had almost touched her; but she had undergone no sensation to correspond with such a conception. Expectancy of feeling rather than feeling itself had put the strain upon her; but nothing had suggested her father's presence but a vague, general description of him which any one might have made up from her own experience; there had been, in addition, only the letter L which, besides referring to London — as she had suggested — might refer to Loutrelle or Lucas or to a hundred other names.

"Some one on earth plane asked for him before; he tried to come. He wants Eva to say he did come; but not with Eva."

"Can he give a name?" Barney inquired.

"He makes a cross," said the voice.

"A church cross?"

"No; two marks; he means on earth plane, 'I was an ignorant man. I did not write name. I made cross.' He did not speak except in his own tongue. Now he does not need to speak in tongues."

"Does he still understand Indian?" Barney asked.

"He nods, yes; of course."

Barney put the next question in a strange word, and Ethel, glancing at his pad, saw that he wrote as his question:

"*Otchiprem?*"

"He nods yes," replied "Eva." "He was a Chip-pewa."

Again Barney asked something in the strange syllables, writing, "*Anindi wendjibaian?*"

"He says from many places," said the voice. "When he was on earth plane, he did not stay long anywhere. He wandered; he had a boat; he wants to say, 'I was a humble man; I took fish on hooks and in nets.'"

Barney wrote out his next question before saying it aloud: "*Maneto o mikweniman no nossan gaic ningaian?*"

"He wants to say," replied the voice, "I have never heard of father."

"*Ninga?*"

"He says, 'Yes.' He says, 'Mother I knew; mother came to shore bearing child; not born child, he says; she was very sick. I took her in tchi — tchi —'"

"What?" Barney asked and held his pencil.

"*Tchiman*," the voice said, and Barney wrote it. "Canoe, that is. It is thought words he speaks; no language; but he wants Eva to say that to you."

"What did he do then for my mother?"

"He says, 'I took her to my house.'"

"*Odenang?*"

"Not near any town, he says. Far from any settlement; to a lonely place; he wants Eva again to say his word to you; it is like *ajawao* —"

"*Ajawao*," Barney wrote and held his pencil.

"*Odjigade*," said the voice; and Barney finished the word, "*Ajawao djigade*," with unsteady fingers. Ethel heard him catch his breath quickly, and she put out her hand for his pad and pencil.

"Let me do it now," she begged.

"I'd better," he said. "Thank you." Then to the medium, "Where?"

"He says, 'To my house in the lonely place where was woman, my wife.' He says, 'There boy was born you stayed there.'"

"What happened to my mother?"

"She stayed there too."

"Then what happened?"

No answer.

"Did she die?" Barney asked.

"No," said the voice. "Pauguk did not strike her. She was very sick; but she did not die; she went away. She had to go away, he wants to say."

"When?"

"At the moon of the wild rice gathering."

"When she went away, he means?"

"Yes."

"Then when did she come?"

"In the moon of the breaking snowshoes."

"What year?"

The medium made no direct answer; but after a pause the voice continued: "He says that all summer she fed the baby at her breast till she went sick again. He wants to tell you that she said, when she went away, she surely would return. He says, 'There I lived until water froze again.' He says, 'When she is gone, I bring milk to the child from a cow. A cow was on the shore; at sunset, when I have taken the fish from the nets, I went ashore in my boat and got milk. But no one came back; so I went away.'"

"Where did you go?" Barney cried quickly, as the medium's posture changed; gone from her, as surprisingly as they had come, were the slight motions of her hands, the jerkings and mannerisms which had char-

acterized the presence of the "control." Mrs. Davol slowly sat upright and gazed dully about like an ordinary, over-fed woman making an apparent effort of memory to recognize her callers.

"Well, dearie," she said at last to Ethel. "Did you get satisfied? Was there good results?"

Ethel realized, with a gasp, that the séance was over. "Satisfied?" she repeated to herself, questioning her own sensations. No; she was not satisfied at all in the sense that she had received from her father any such communication as she had hoped for. Indeed, she could not feel that she had heard from her father at all; and what she had gained from the extraordinary recital about J. Q. was almost meaningless. The communication from the Indian spirit meant little to her; but it had given much to Barney. In his emotion, she had almost forgotten about herself; and it was for him she was feeling when she said, "Yes; we got a good deal, Mrs. Davol."

"I'm right glad," Mrs. Davol said, standing up. "I nearly always get good results, though, as I said, I can't guarantee 'em." She gazed at Barney and, evidently satisfied that he had felt the results, she appealed to Bennet. "You're pleased too? You're all pleased?"

"Oh, we'll come again, probably," Bennet assured her, looking about for his coat and hat.

"I don't like to take money except for good satisfaction," Mrs. Davol said placidly; and Ethel opened her handbag. But Barney paid before she could. The amount was twenty dollars, and as Bennet insisted that he had been in on the show, and it was worth the money, he shared the payment.

It was barely half-past nine when they found

themselves again in Bennet's car; and Bennet invited both his cousin and her friend to his father's apartment. When Ethel refused, as he expected her to, he hurried them to the Scott Street house and entered with them.

"Not a bad show, when you think it over," he commented, with the slight depreciation expected of a host when referring to an entertainment which he has prepared for. "She really did pretty well, didn't she?"

Ethel refrained from replying, and Bennet continued, "She did a fair amount of mind reading. Not as much as you get from a good act at vaudeville where they read what's on the card in your pocket. Even I had 'em do that to you, Loutrelle?"

"No," said Barney.

"Well, that's really good sometimes; much better than anything we got to-night. Of course we all were there loaded with the idea of James Quinlan, and she was clever enough to get the initials of the name from us. Now while that wasn't like a good act, it wasn't bad. Then she pulled some silly stuff like they all do."

"You mean about the torch and Galilee?" Barney said.

"Did that mean anything to you?" Bennet challenged.

"No," Barney admitted.

Bennet turned from him to Ethel. "Then that stuff about your father was pure fake, of course. She got it up. Nothing any one could check. Now how did she really do it, Loutrelle? What was that stuff you asked her?"

"I put some questions in Chippewa."

"Why in Chippewa?"

"The Indians I was raised with were Chippewas."

"I see."

"The questions I asked were," Barney referred to his transcript of the sitting, "'Chippewa?'—'From where did you come?'—'Does the spirit know my mother and father?'—Then after she had replied, 'I have never heard of father,' I asked 'Mother?' and then 'In a town?'" The Chippewa words, which were spoken in reply meant, as she said, canoe: the other expression used meant, 'It was carried by boat across water—a short stretch of water, like a river or a channel.'"

"That was all straight?" Bennet returned.

"Straight?" Barney repeated.

Bennet flushed a little. "I meant, you didn't fool yourself? You see, the explanation of most of this stuff is that when people think they get results, they do it themselves; they give something away or take an answer to mean something particular to them when it might apply to almost any one. Of course, her understanding Chippewa words doesn't mean anything. She was using telepathy anyway, reading thoughts instead of words. I've seen an Italian mind-reader work that way. She couldn't speak or read English normally; but she could read the ideas that English people had in their heads. So while it looked impressive, if she got the general idea you put in Chippewa words—and if she got a word or two of Indian from you to sling back—it wasn't anything different."

Bennet seemed to expect his cousin or Barney to dispute him; and evidently he was disappointed when they did not. He realized that what they wanted was to be alone to talk together; but he had no idea of departing yet.

"So I don't see just what you got to-night," Ben-

net challenged them both. "I certainly don't where you found anything to back up your charge against grandfather!" he said to his cousin more directly. "Last week you told me that grandfather mixed up in a murder; to-night you say it again give me a lot of proof — stuff which you think is proof — that you got mostly from spooks. I told you last week to be careful; and I tell you now," he turned and included Barney in his warning, "you be careful you be pretty damned careful what you say and do. The family's stood for a good deal already from Etienne because she's in the family, and if she wants to make like a mental case, we'll make allowances for her. But we'll make no allowances for you, Loutrelle Bennet was working himself up and getting back at Barney now for his discomfiture earlier in the evening.

Again he stopped, waiting for dispute; but again was disappointed. Barney was standing, as Bennet was also now on his feet.

"You make me sick, both of you," Bennet blurted out in disgust, glancing from Barney to his cousin. "You're a fine one, thinking such things and saying such things about grandfather with a stranger; and you don't believe them; you know you don't; and you prove it."

"How does she prove it?" Barney asked.

"Because you don't dare *do* anything. You say my grandfather's mixed up in a murder,—a first-degree, premeditated, capital crime which Kincheloe committed. If you believed it, you'd get Kincheloe at least, locked up."

"Where is Kincheloe?" Barney returned. "Here in Chicago?"

"Of course he is."

"Where? Have you his address?"

"Wilson Avenue. I don't know exactly where; but he's living up in that district somewhere. I'll get the exact address and send it to you," Bennet defied, "tomorrow morning."

There was nothing for him to do after that but leave; and his cousin went with him to the hall. "So you mean to get in the police. All right; get; and I'll land you in the psychopathic ward!" he threatened.

CHAPTER XVI

THE RIGHT TO LOVE

ETHEL forgot him almost as soon as he had slammed the front door behind him.

"You think we'd better have Kincheloe arrested?" she asked Barney when she returned to the drawing-room.

"I'd like to know what he's doing now," Barney said.

"Oh; Bennet's told me. He's having his sort of a fast time. That part of Chicago's called, by people who go there, 'Little Paris.' I think it's the sort of place Kincheloe always went to by himself; he's more money to spend there now, though. I suppose he gets it from grandfather."

Barney made no comment, and they both sat down.

"It was — surprising, wasn't it?" she asked, looking at him, her mind now washed free from Bennet's interjections.

"What we got?" Barney asked. "Yes."

"Mine, of course, wasn't much, if it was anything at all. But yours — do you want to tell me what you thought about it?"

"You mean whether I believed those were the circumstances of my birth? Whether the Indian was telling me of my mother? Yes, I did, Miss Carew."

"Who could the Indian be? Noah Jo?"

"I suppose so."

"I wonder why he couldn't give his name?"

"They often find it hard to; that's all the Adleys were able to say," Barney replied. "They can communicate other words — even difficult ones, like some we got to-night — better than names. It wasn't so surprising, when you come to think of it, that she could understand Chippewa words," Barney admitted, considering with himself quite as much as arguing with Ethel. "Probably she could do that a good deal in the way your cousin said. But it was what the Indian told that gave me the start. You see, that expression about crossing a narrow strip of water — It's exactly the one that Asa Redbird uses now, for instance, when taking anything from the shore to Resurrection Rock. Of course, it might apply to other channels, too; but the business about the milk hardly could."

He stood up and, turning his back to Ethel, he strode away, as he had a habit of doing when beset by emotion.

"I didn't tell you about this before, Miss Carew," he said haltingly when he turned back toward her, "because it seemed so trivial. But Wheedon happened to tell me one night last week when we were talking about the Rock, that a long time ago — twenty-two or three years ago — an Indian fisherman used to live on the Rock. Did you ever hear of him?"

"Yes," said Ethel.

"Did you ever learn his name?"

"No."

"Wheedon had forgotten it, if he ever knew; but he told me that he was a good Indian; he happened to mention that one summer the Indian had a baby, and every night he'd come ashore, after he'd seen to his nets, and get milk to take back to the baby."

"A white baby, Barney?"

"I don't know. I didn't ask him. He didn't say. You see — you see — Miss Carew, it hadn't occurred to me then that I —"

"What, Barney?"

"That I might have been born on the Rock, Miss Carew."

"Barney!" Ethel rebuked him by his own name gently. "Barney!"

"You can't want me to call you —"

"I can't?"

"Ethel!" he said, hardly whispering it; but she heard. "Ethel!" he clenched his hands behind him and she stepped farther back. "That's the way I was born, I believe!"

"Let's believe it, Barney!"

"Miss Carew!"

"I don't mind believing it, Barney! It doesn't change you! Except to make you finer!"

"Finer?"

"Because you've had to do it all yourself! Don't you see how I —" she faltered a little and substituted — "how every one must admire you only more for that! Besides, my people are to blame."

"How do you mean?" he asked quickly.

"They must be; I don't know more than you do, oh, Barney, I've told you everything. But we both of us know together that my people — my grandfather and my uncle, at least — tried to harm you. Not to hurt you, perhaps; but they saw that Quinlan was killed before he could find you. Why? You hadn't done anything to any of my family; you hadn't even heard of them before you met me. It was what you were — because you were that baby born

on the Rock; and they knew it. I told you that morning we met when we were in that cabin — remember?"

"Remember?" he repeated.

"I said you might be — any one!" she recalled, gazing up at him with eyes suddenly wet. "You are not — not just an outcast born in an Indian hut. I don't think I'd care if you were! But we know there was a reason why your mother had to go there! And my people were back of that reason. Besides them, I think Quinlan knew it; and they had to kill him to stop him from finding you. The burden of proving respectability — if either of us is thinking of that — is on my people, I'd say; not on you!"

"Miss Carew!" he protested again. He still stood away from her; but she could see him trembling; she herself was quivering.

She had not intended to say what she had; but having said it, she meant it. She would not care if he were an outcast born in a Chippewa shack; but the certainty that he was not was never clearer to her than now. He had seemed to her "some one" that morning when she first saw him when he was in his rough army coat and surrounded only by travelers on the northern woods train; this feeling had deepened during her companionship with him on their way to St. Florentin and afterwards. But there, too, he had been in rough environment. Here he was in Agnes's drawing-room; and as Ethel gazed at him, she felt that her cousin Bennet — or, indeed, any other man whom she knew — had been far more out of place in this room than Barney. It was not alone the natural ease of his tall, well-formed figure; he possessed that attribute which Ethel could define no more distinctly to herself than by thinking of him as "well-born." The word

had nothing to do, she knew, with the wealth or social position of his parents; for her own wealthy friends more often lacked this distinction than not. Bennet did not have it; nor his friends. But her father had had it, though originally he had been poor; others of his friends had possessed it. Barney did.

"I know now why grandfather feared the Rock all these years, Barney; it was for fear you'd come back! That's why Halford and the other man waited there; for word of you! That's why the house was built and left to wait; for you! Never think of yourself again as — as you said you did sometimes! Now tell me what some of those things meant. He said — that Indian — that your mother went away in the moon of the wild rice gathering; what does that mean?"

"It is only English for the Chippewa way of saying September, Miss Carew."

"And the moon of the breaking snowshoes?"

"That's the way the Chippewa speaks of April."

"Do they? That's beautiful, Barney. I didn't realize that you spoke Chippewa; you would, of course. But I didn't think of it. You see, Sam Green Sky and Asa and the other Indians we have around always speak English with us; of course, I knew they didn't among themselves."

"I can't remember learning Chippewa," Barney said. "But I can remember learning English."

"I hadn't really known about you, Barney; I thought I did. I've been thinking about you, really, a very great deal; but I see I didn't succeed in placing you in your boyhood."

He said nothing but stood gazing at her questioningly and waited; and more clearly than ever before she pictured him, — the little white boy, with the good,

even eyes, looking up bewildered at the Indian who was telling him he was white. Her eyes dimmed.

"But this which we learned to-night, Barney, helps a lot; your mother came — with you," she added gently, "to the shore there beyond St. Florentin. In April — the moon of the breaking snowshoes," she repeated the poetry of the Indian phrase, "Noah Jo — we may as well call him that — took her in his boat across the channel to Resurrection Rock where he and his wife took care of her. You were born there; in September your mother was sick; but *Pauguk* did not strike her; what does that mean, Barney?"

"Death; *Pauguk* is death."

"Yes; it seemed so. She did not die — there, at least. But she went away and did not come back, though Noah Jo waited there until winter —"

"November, he meant," Barney supplied. "He spoke of the freezing of water; that is the Chippewa name for November — the moon of the freezing again."

"I see. And then, as he was a nomad, he went away and took you; he died — now you're coming to affairs you learned from Azen Mabo — and gave you to Azen without being able to tell anything about you but that the ring went with you. We don't know why your mother couldn't come back; or why your father wasn't there; but we know that one of them — or some one — did everything they could to find you later. They kept the watch on the Rock; they bought the Rock and built the house and kept it there for you — and then, when my father was dead, he found you, it seems, and sent you there; and some one sent Quinlan; but my grandfather had Quinlan killed — we really got quite a lot to-night, didn't we, Barney?"

"I've got," Barney said, his hands still clenched be-

hind him, "more than I ever had in all my life before."

He moved a little nearer her. "I don't mean from the medium; I mean from you — Miss — Ethel Carew. You're a strange girl; the finest and noblest in all the world," he added quickly. "From the first, in spite of how I told you about myself, you treated me as I never expected any girl of your kind could. Why even in Boyne, the girls couldn't help holding my — what wasn't known — against me! But you never did. You just made it good — yourself and to me! You turned against your own people, and you trusted me!"

"You, Barney? Why? How could I help it?"

"Don't!" he warned sharply. "I've got to thinking about you in a way I never should. I know that perfectly well —"

"How do you think about me, Barney?"

"Think?" he repeated. "I don't think about you. I can't. I love — love — love you! There, I've said it!" He snatched his hands apart behind him and struck them together before him in his dismay.

"I —" she stopped.

"Oh, what, please?"

"I'm glad you did, Barney."

"Oh, you're so decent, Ethel Carew! You're so — so *binisika* decent. That's Indian; it means of you, yourself, through and through, because it's you and for no other reason. That's the way this is, Miss Carew; and I know it. Because you're you, you picked me up and went to making me believe in myself and that I was right in thinking of myself as something like you, whereas you should — you should have doubted me at once, like every one else, and questioned me and made me prove —"

"Prove what, Barney?"

"What I am."

"But that's always been plain, Barney; nothing — nothing we could possibly find could make you different."

"Lots of things could."

"Could anything make you think differently about me?"

"About you?" he repeated wonderingly and laughed in joy. "What do you mean?"

"Just what you meant to me."

"But there couldn't be anything about yourself that could change you."

"Nor you, Barney."

He started closer to her, then controlled himself and jerked about and strode a few steps away, where he stood with his back toward her.

"Caring about a girl — love, Miss Carew," he said, still turned from her, "it was a thing I'd put off. It didn't seem to be for me. Not that I didn't have normal feelings; but even in Boyne, I said, any girl would want to know about me. They were very kind, you understand. I could go with them to dances, and they'd be nice to me —"

"Nice to you!" Ethel interrupted. "I should think they would be."

He half turned about, a warm flush passing over his face; at some memory, Ethel thought, of an occasion when some one might not have been so "nice."

"— but it was understood that no one could 'consider' Barney Loutrelle."

"Who understood it?"

"All of them — I," Barney said quietly.

She put her hand toward him impulsively. He had

clasped his hands behind him again; and at her offering, she saw him strain at the tenseness with which he locked his hold upon his wrist. Wetness again came to her eyes; and she withdrew her hand, unoffended.

"You love me, Barney?" she said.

"Love you! Love you!"

"I love you, Barney. I've loved you from our first morning together, I think."

"No; no; no!" he tried to deny her; but she only smiled up at him and said:

"Yes; you've known that, Barney. That's been what's troubled you; not that you loved me, but that it was so plain that I loved you."

"So plain!" he denied, almost furiously, for her.

"It wasn't. It's not true now!"

"Oh, isn't it? Do you suppose I'm ashamed."

He dropped to his knees before her and caught her hands and held them.

"The moment I saw you, Ethel Carew, I — cared. You didn't even see me then. I was in the car when you came in; you hardly looked at me. I watched you all that evening, while you worked over those papers in your section. Sometimes you seemed trying to decide things; sometimes it seemed you were just adding up figures which wouldn't come out right. It was wonderful to be able to watch you; you didn't know I was there at all."

"Oh, yes, I did."

"That much, perhaps; but you didn't care about me, then."

"I didn't know anything about you."

"Nor I about you; but I cared."

"How?"

"It seemed I had to help you; I wanted to go over and grab those papers and make the answers come out right — or tell you they didn't matter."

"They didn't, Barney — as it turned out."

"Then the next morning you spoke to me! It was you — you whose name I had."

"That was so strange, Barney!"

"Only wonderful, Ethel! All that morning, while I was talking to you as I had never spoken to any girl before, I kept dreaming, hoping one thing."

"What was it?"

"That what I was to learn at the Rock would make it possible for me to be your friend. I was excited that morning, you remember, when you told me there was such a place as St. Florentin and Resurrection Rock. It seemed to me that at last I was getting close to the thing I'd wondered and dreamed about all my life — who my people were and why I had that ring! I'd dreamed great and marvellous things about myself sometimes, Ethel."

"I know; I know!"

"But that morning, they all left me for something more wonderful yet. If I could have found myself a prince or some sort of heir to half the riches of the world — you know how one imagines, Ethel?"

"Oh, yes!"

"I'd have given that up just to find enough that was good and decent and honest about myself to make it right for me to follow you — and love you."

"That was in your mind that morning, Barney?"

"When you spoke to me when I was staring at the fire in the cabin."

"I see!"

"Then that night when I was alone there — and

the next morning, dear, dear, Ethel — but I'd found nothing out, you know; nothing about myself. I found out nothing now of the knowledge I ought to have."

"But you've found I don't care except about you."

He bent his head and drew her hands to his lips and his kiss, though not at all like the first love kiss she had dreamed to be hers some day, brought her an amazing ecstasy. She loved this boy who so loved her and yet, half in fear of himself, half in fear of her, held from her even in their rapture. She wanted him nearer now; she wanted his arms about her, his strength subduing hers, overpowering and holding her and yet she delighted too in his courtly awe of her when he had kissed her hands and released her, catching his breath, after no more than that.

"I've never —" he said, "I've never had anything like that before."

"Nor I! Nor I!" Ethel cried; she caught his hands now and held him before her.

"You'd not? All the men in the world must have loved you, Ethel, the moment they caught sight of you."

"And the women, you! Yet you didn't care until you saw me! Not even abroad, Barney, in England and France where girls —"

He gazed steadily into her eyes, knowing what she would not, and yet wished to ask. Had he been, even without love, another girl's?

"There are some advantages in being brought up in an Indian shack, Ethel," he said. "They've only one room often, you know; with sometimes two families or three; and lots of human living is there. What you learn turns you straight either one way or the

other; it turned me to look for — for you; and to wait till I'd found you."

She bent down and kissed his fingers; so he arose and drew her up with him. For a few moments he held her against him with her bosom trembling on his throbbing breast; then, slipping his arms lower, he lifted her and, laughing at her quiver under his strength, he strode with her a few steps and catching her higher, he brought his lips to hers.

"The savage in me," he said, at last letting her slip down.

"Oh, I liked it!"

"I," he said, gasping. "I can't stay here any longer now."

"Why not?"

"The time," he said, turning to the clock; but, though now it was almost midnight, she knew he was not thinking chiefly of the time, but of what he had done; and she would not have him question it.

"Where are you going to-night, dear?" she asked.

"To-night?" he said, as though the thought had just occurred to him. "I left my bag at the station. I'll go back there first; and then — what difference, Ethel? I'll not sleep; what a waste of recollection of you unless I'd be sure to dream! I'll not take that chance."

"You must; I must know where you are, now. I must think, too!"

"You'll be here, I'll know; that will be good to think."

"In the morning you'll come back?"

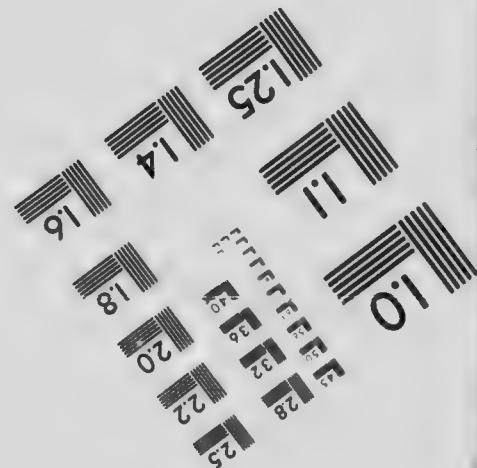
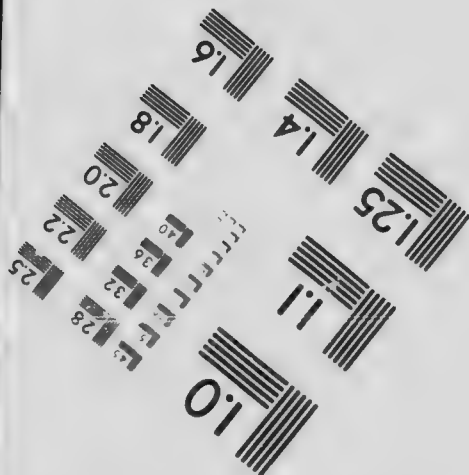
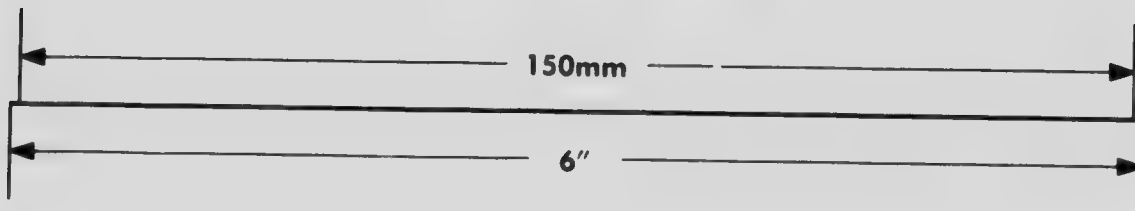
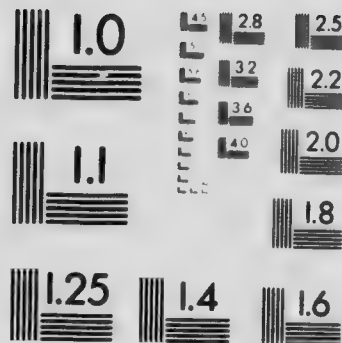
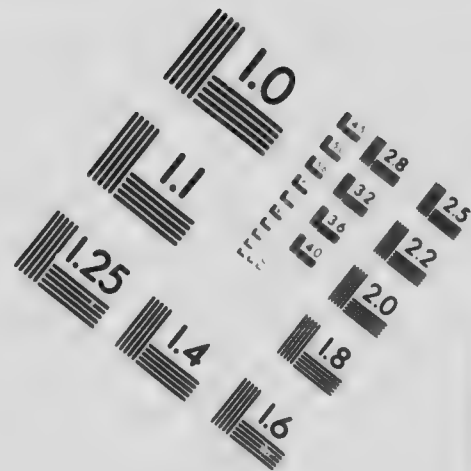
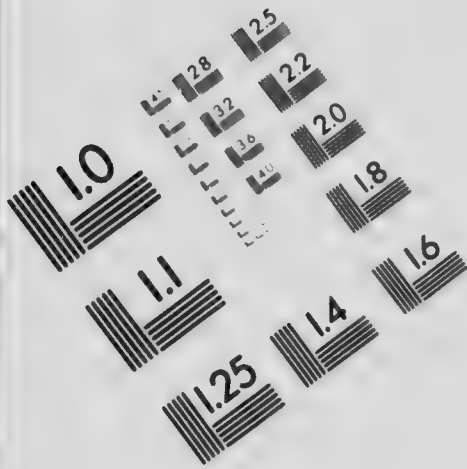
"You want me to?"

"Want you!"

"Now you do; but to-morrow morning?"



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"Just come and see."

"I will then! Good night!"

"Good night!"

"Oh, I've done wrong, I know, Ethel! But not hate me?"

"Hold me once again!"

"Now then — good night!"

"Oh, good night!"

But you'll

CHAPTER XVII

"I MUST NEVER SEE HIM AGAIN"

ETHEL held the door open, after Barney had gone, until he had passed the corner and turned; and then, for many minutes, she could not leave the room where they had been. But at last a servant, timidly making the rounds to see to the lights, reminded her of the hour, and she went to her room and undressed; and there, in her nightdress, she sat upon her bed, part of the time gazing at his picture on the bed beside her, part of the time leaning back, clasping her knees, with eyes half closed, re-feeling his arms about her, lips on hers, her body crushed to his breast.

Only in the fleeting, inconsequential interruptions, which she quickly ended, did thought of her cousin and of her grandfather come to her. Yet at that hour, her grandfather was also still awake and concerned most intensely with menaces for her.

For Bennet, having gone directly home from Scott Street, had found his father and mother out and his grandmother in bed, but his grandfather was still up and reading.

"Well?" Lucas demanded, thrusting his fingers through his thick hair, as he looked up when Bennet entered. "Where have you been this fine evening?"

Lucas knew perfectly well; for by that time he had received a report from his dependable operative; but

as the operative had not been able to learn much what had gone on in Mrs. Davol's home, Lucas let his grandson relate what he already knew for the sake of hearing all the proceedings in order.

Bennet had brought the events up to the departure for the séance when the telephone bell rang and a new servant appeared who reported to Lucas:

"It is Mr. Dougherty, sir, speaking for Mr. John Smith; he says, sir, he feels sure that if you realize the circumstances, you will arrange Mr. Smith's release once, sir —"

"You tell Mr. Dougherty and Mr. John Smith both to go to hell," Lucas commanded calmly. "Now when he calls again, don't bother me."

When the man disappeared, Lucas demanded of his grandson,

"Want to know who Mr. John Smith is?"

"Who?" said Bennet.

"Miss Platt's husband; Mr. Merrill Stacey Kinchloe. Do you want to know where he is? In the station cell, the lewd, little lizard. He was taken in a rare place up in 'Little Paris'; I understand they caught him; scared his wife will hear 'bout it, so he gave him his highly original name of John Smith. Seems to have it on his mind it distresses me to know he's spending the night in jail. Seems to've convinced some shyster he just can't bear it. Go on, my boy, you were saying —"

So Bennet went on, lightly describing his adventures with the medium, relating all incidents in order except for the mention of the spirit who showed the letter "J.Q." Being aware that any reference to Quinlan was unpleasant to his grandfather, Bennet made the most of his satirical description of the other "acts"

before he told about the spook who had displayed a capital J. and Q.

This evoked from his grandfather a different quality of attention, but there was no distinct alteration in Lucas's attitude until Bennet related how the medium had said that the spirit had raised a flaming torch and associated the torch with the word Galilee.

So alarming was the consequence of this that Bennet could not at once realize it was simply a consequence. He jumped up in fright, imagining that his grandfather suddenly had suffered from a cramp or other physical seizure.

"Why, grandfather, you want some whiskey? I'll get you —"

Lucas controlled himself and stood up. "Indigestion," he mumbled. "Caviar here to-night. Go on; what else happened?"

When Bennet informed him that nothing else transpired at the séance, he thought for a while that his grandson was concealing something; but at last he satisfied himself that he knew all; and he went to his room.

Bennet's complaisance over the results of this evening now was completely routed. When he went to his room, he flung himself down only to jump up again and stamp about in his impotent anger at Ethel and Lou-trelle. "Galilee" and the flaming torch; what was behind them to bring such a reaction from his grandfather? Bennet did not like it at all.

And less would he have liked it had he observed the persistence of the effect upon his grandfather. For Lucas, after leaving his grandson, had passed through the room where was his bed, and where his wife was sleeping, to the bedless room beyond; there he opened

the wide window to get air and stood in the dark s
ing down upon the lake and listening to its tun
Vaguely in the dim light of the winter stars, he c
see the surf leaping landward, hurled by the gale f
the north; here and there, near the concrete esca
ment of the beach, glints of street lights flickered
the furious up-leap of the halted waves; but old Lu
looked far beyond the near-by fury into the dark
of the distant waters north; and his thoughts and
torment of his breast were bound with the shores
away and with a tiny, long-forgotten hamlet in
pine forest above the lake called long ago, by its M
mon settlers, "Galilee." Nothing had ever happen
at Galilee itself,—nothing of extraordinary viole
or wrong. It had been a harmless, innocent place:
one could possibly have any particular occasion to
call "Galilee" or connect it with a flaming torch
with any one who displayed the letters "J.Q.",—c
cept Lucas Cullen himself and one other man.

For Lucas never did anything at all at Galilee c
cept meet James Quinlan there and there direct J.
to the deed that was to be done.

It was marvellous how, throughout the forty-s
years which had passed since that meeting, Lucas ha
carried consciousness of his own guilt always ass
ciated with the place of meeting, "Galilee." He ha
not known that Quinlan had done so too. He had sup
posed that Quinlan had lived out his life with a di
ferent association. And yet this was natural enough.

"Natural enough!" Lucas muttered to himself
"Galilee!"

But J. Q. was dead; Kincheloe had put his body i
the lake. Who, then, knew about Galilee and coul
associate it with a flaming torch? No one else in al

the world but Lucas himself! Yet Ethel and that Lou-trelle and Bennet had found out. How? From him?

"By telepathy," Lucas murmured to himself. "By transference of thought." So he sought to explain away the incident as Bennet had tried to do. But the explanation brought neither conviction nor reassurance. Suppose he persuaded himself that it could not have been the ghost of James Quinlan who had informed upon him; suppose he was certain that they had obtained this knowledge from himself?

By God, if they drew "Galilee" and the torch from him, what else could they draw? And if they obtained it not from him, but from the dead, how much more would the dead tell?

Lucas swung from his window to the pile of books which he had purchased the day before, and he struck them with his fist, dashing them over the floor; but that blow of anger and contempt could not undo their effect upon him. For during these last days he had continued to read; and the more his study maddened him and undermined his confidence in himself, the more he had read. Men — sensible men, whom Lucas knew and whom he knew — believed, in these degenerate days, that the dead could return and disclose secrets.

That, if verifiable, was decidedly a staggerer for Lucas who had acted, at certain crises of his life, upon the simple and effective formula that dead men tell no tales. "Galilee and a flaming torch!" Lucas winced and swung back to his window. So old J. Q., though dead, had told? How could Lucas shut up a ghost?

Suddenly his shoulders hunched up, and he spun about with fists clenched and menacing. He had had an insane fancy that J. Q., holding a flaming torch, was in the room behind him. Of course, nothing was there.

And the absence of any materiality almost disappointed Lucas; it left him too helpless.

He shut down the window, as it had become very dark in the room; but he paced about in the dark, thinking, and his shrewd, selfish, cruel mind attacked his probability of silencing that ghost by assault upon the physical elements with whose laws Lucas was completely familiar. He succeeded in entirely shutting out, from his thoughts, the effect of "Galilee" upon him, while he considered the relations of Ethel and Bartram Loutrelle. An idea, half formed, seized him; and he stood stark. It progressed in his mind; and he laughed. In a reaction, it revolted himself; he discarded it; but it came back to him, more convincing, more complete, and it promised him triumph. Again he laughed and clung to it; in the dark alone he planned and schemed and chuckled to himself; and undressed there in the dark, so as not to see his own face, while he perfected and determined upon what he had to do.

It was after nine the next morning before Ethel awoke; and then it was so delightful to lie in bed, dreaming over the hours of the evening, that she made no stir, and it was ten when Mrs. Wain at last became convinced that her guest was awake and knocked gently at the door.

She sent in a maid with a breakfast tray, and upon it was a box from a florist which Ethel instantly opened to discover within orchids amid fern; and with them a note:

How can I trust my memories this morning? I would bring these; I would have waited from daylight at your door; may I come early this afternoon?

will try at three; and if you do not want me then, only tell me when you may.

BARNEY.

On the other side he had written, "I liked these because they reminded me of the moccasin flower of the north. Do you know it, blossoming in the spring in the marshes?"

"I know it," Ethel said aloud to herself in answer, holding the soft petals against her cheek; she thought she had never known the joy of flowers before; and yet, with dismay, she could not help counting their cost to her lover. She wished he had noted where he was staying; but he had not; she thought of him, sparing expenditure for himself, having breakfast at some cheap lunch counter. She wished she could send for him at once to share with her the food upon her tray.

When she arose, it was hard to lay aside the dress she had worn in the evening when she was in his arms. At moments she flushed and then was bold and unashamed to acknowledge how physically she desired him; she thought of his coloring and the texture of his cheek and hands; the feel of his arms; the contours of his body; and his impulsive strength; and she knew, much as she longed even for sound of his voice over the telephone or for sight of him in the street, she could never be satisfied to be with him again and have less than last night.

"I love you!" she whispered.

The knowledge that the front doorbell had rung and that some one was being admitted, set her to quivering so that she was powerless, for a moment, to fasten hooks and eyes; when a maid knocked at her door, she answered joyously. "Some one for me?"

"Yes, Miss Carew. Mr. Cullen."

"Mr. Cullen? Oh! Oh! Which Mr. Cullen; mean Mr. Bennet Cullen?"

"No, Miss Carew. Mr. Lucas Cullen, your grandfather."

Ethel shrank in the sudden constriction of death that something had happened to Barney. In so far as it was based upon reason, it came from knowledge that, after her grandfather had disowned her at St. Florentin, he would never have sought her again except in triumph over her; and particularly when he was in the house of her who had been, in her life, his most bitter enemy.

Ethel had not known of his visiting this house before, and when she went out into the hall and encountered Mrs. Wain, she found the housekeeper agitated evidently by the same extraordinary circumstance.

"It is Mr. Lucas Cullen, Senior," Mrs. Wain repeated.

Ethel hastened down and found her grandfather with his overcoat on and holding his hat in his gloved hand, standing in the center of the drawing-room and gazing critically about. Whatever his purpose in seeking Ethel, it did not serve to keep his thoughts from his nephew's wife.

"Hideous place," he passed his judgment of Agnes's taste in decoration before deigning attention to her granddaughter. "Well!" he noticed her directly. "Well! Sit down!"

Ethel did not obey but continued to stand, asking him in turn to seat himself. If she had expected a marked change in him since her last combat with him at St. Florentin, she was disappointed; even his fatigue was the same, as he made not the slightest change

cession to city ideas. He was closely shaven, as he always was in the morning; his brows shaggy, his eyes clear and steady. He scrutinized her keenly and suddenly asked, "Who's listening about?"

"No one, I think," Ethel said.

"Make sure of it," he commanded; and Ethel complied. She no longer feared that Barney had suffered any "accident." Her grandfather's errand menaced her, she knew, but in some different manner from her first apprehension. He had succeeded in making her anxious to hear; and, aware of this, he delayed.

"They've made you comfortable here, have they?"

"Very comfortable, grandfather."

"H'm! Of course you've gone your own way; no one to interfere with you, eh?"

"No one," Ethel replied.

"You little fool!" he accused her commiseratingly.

"Can't you feel even when your own flesh and blood tries to protect you?"

"From what, grandfather?"

"Had it ever occurred to you that the reason your father never came to my house was that he couldn't?"

"No," Ethel said.

"Think over it a minute."

"Why?"

"Why wouldn't I have him there? He couldn't tell you, I wouldn't. I thought I'd never have to; but you've forced me. This fellow you call Loutrelle. I told you to bring him to see me, didn't I? The first moment I heard you were with him, I said to you, 'Tell him to come to see me!' But you were both so smart; you wanted to do everything yourself. He didn't come."

"He came the next morning, grandfather."

"Eh? You expected me to talk to him then, way you were carrying on? But I separated, didn't I? I sent you away. That seemed enough that morning."

"For what?" Ethel asked nervously.

"But of course he had to follow you down. Now I've got to talk to you. You believe that your father — so Bennet's been telling me — got in touch with that fellow called Loutrelle after your father died? That started your interest in him?"

"Yes."

"Why do you suppose your father did that? Why did he pick him, I mean?"

"Why — why, grandfather; he was going to meet me. Father knew that, some way —"

"Tomfoolery! Look here, your father was killed and after he was dead — so you think — he tried to talk to this Loutrelle. Now I'm not saying I believe that: I'm taking just what you think. I'm not here to tell you anything this morning on my word, after what you've said to me. So let's just take your own information; your father's spirit, the first thing after he was dead, goes about looking for a fellow named Barney Loutrelle. Now spirits — all I've heard of — usually go first for those closest to 'em, don't they?"

"Why, usually, grandfather."

"Well, what makes you think this is an exception?"

Ethel shrank back, comprehending less his words than the ugliness of his inflection.

"What do you mean?" she demanded.

"He must have had a father, didn't he? That fellow you call Loutrelle?"

Ethel stared without answering.

"Well, who more natural for a father to seek than his son?"

"My father!" Ethel said. "You're talking about my father?"

"Before he was your father. I knew him! He was about St. Florentin quite a little in the old days — quite a little! You may remember I would not have him marry my daughter. So they ran off. I knew — there was a girl to go to Resurrection Rock."

Ethel flung herself at him and with her little fists clenched tight she pummeled him on the chest. "You lie — you lie — you lie! My father! You lie — you lie —"

Mercifully at that moment, the shock of it stunned her from thinking beyond the reference directed to her father; she could not realize what it meant between herself and Barney and what was the purpose of her grandfather in telling this to her. Besides, she refused all truth to it. Her grandfather, always the enemy of her dead father, was slandering him now; that was all she could think. "Oh, you lie — you lie."

He caught her fists and held her brutally before him. He saw that he had not at all convinced her; but he had not expected to simply by this statement of the false before combining it with what was true. He was too old and shrewd in experience to fail to know how a truth told may carry with it a lie.

"Who was his father then?" he demanded of his granddaughter, half shaking her. "Do you know? Then tell me! I don't *know*, of course; paternity's not like maternity; but his mother — Do you know who she was? Agnes here!" Suddenly he dropped Ethel and gestured horridly with both hands. "Your father and your father's friend — Agnes!"

"Oh! Oh! God!" Ethel cried.

Her grandfather said not another word; he stood for only a moment more, looking at her; then, satisfied, he pulled on his hat and stalked to the door. Ethel had not known whether Ethel had learned enough to have already come to believe that Agnes had been the mother of Barney Loutrelle; and the success of Luca's scheme swung on that. But he saw that he had told her something which she was sure was true; and although she might deny and refuse his statement about her father, yet he had planted in her a doubt — a question, unresolvable — and this, for his purpose, was as useful as credence.

He let himself out and walked down to his son's town car which had waited.

In the whirl of her emotions, she was endeavoring to fasten thought upon Barney or, as cousin Agnes called him, Agnes's son; but against her will, and revolting her, thought of her father would come in. A score of circumstances marshalled in her mind to deny her grandfather's word; and then a score more crowded to lend it a color of credulity. Agnes's son! Yes; that was well; she felt no recoil at that; but at the idea of her father as Agnes — A lie — Yet why had her father sought Barney? — Who? — Oh, she could not believe it; she could not know. And if it were true?

Oh, last night he had taken her as a lover, Agnes's son and — her father's? She was here in Agnes's house — Agnes who might have been — might have been —

Only a few short moments ago, she had been longing for Barney, her heart leaping at every sound which might announce him; she had desired his voice, sight of him, the pressure of his lips, his cheek warm again

hers, his arms about her, their bodies quivering together. Now the recollection sickened her; she could never see him again until she could *know*. And if this were not true, would she ever know? And if it were true?

She gazed about at the room to which, a minute ago, her grandfather had motioned with horror; and she shuddered. She could not stay here. Her father and cousin Agnes — a lie — yet — yet —

She heard some one coming and, starting up, she saw cousin Agnes's housekeeper. Mrs. Wain, usually so calm, so completely in control of herself, advanced under a nervous tension which visibly shook her slight body. Her face was gray; her hands were gray and quivering; with her first words she confessed that she had posted herself somewhere within hearing of Lucas Cullen's voice.

"What was he saying to you of Mrs. Oliver Cullen?" she besought, her hands trembling on Ethel's shoulder. "What was he telling to you? Oh, you must tell me; he said Mrs. Cullen —"

"Nothing about her now!" Ethel cried. "I mean, he was talking about her long ago. But — but," suddenly she collapsed in the housekeeper's arms. "I'm going away; home to Wyoming, Mrs. Wain. You must help me off. And if Mr. Loutrelle calls for me or telephones, I can not speak to him! I can't see him! Perhaps — perhaps I can write. But I'm going home; no; don't tell him that. He'd try to follow. I must go away from him; from every one. I must never see him again!"

CHAPTER XVIII

THE WOMAN WHO WENT TO THE ROCK

EARLY that afternoon, Lucas's dependable operative reported that he had followed E. J. Carew from the house on Scott Street to Union Station where she purchased a ticket boarded a Chicago, Burlington and Quincy train for Sheridan, Wyoming. She had been unattended plainly under the stress of strong emotion. Lucas sent the man back to Scott Street to wait for Bar Loutrelle. Accordingly, the man later reported that a few minutes before three, Loutrelle walked past the Oliver Cullen house, looking up at the windows; almost exactly at three, he presented himself at the door and was admitted by a servant. Four minutes later, Loutrelle came out, evidently so astonished at what he had learned in the house that he seemed completely at a loss. He set off, walking so rapidly that the operative had great difficulty in following him; but his choice of direction seemed to be haphazard. He halted at a quiet spot and took from his pocket a note which he read and reread; at last he went to a boarding house on Superior Street, where he had a room.

The operative, forsaking the field of direct observation for an excursion into deduction, ventured that Loutrelle's agitation was due to the note which explained Miss Carew's sudden departure.

"I wouldn't be a mite surprised," Lucas said con-

comfortably to himself, when he read over this report. He bit off a fresh cigar and, licking it unlit between his lips, he went to the window where he had stood in fear the night before, looking up the lake and thinking of "Galilee."

It was plain that his scheme had resulted well; accordingly he complimented his operative and instructed him to cease giving attention to Scott Street but for the present to keep an eye out for Loutrelle; and when the attorney Dougherty telephoned that morning for funds to pay the fine of Merrill Kincheloe — alias John Smith — Lucas sent the money.

"But I'd like to know what my granddaughter said to that —" Lucas mused, unnamably, to himself when his mind dwelt on the main matter in hand.

What Ethel had told Barney was brief and simple in its final statement, though it was the result of two hours' struggle with pen and paper, during which she wrote and destroyed many more elaborate attempts at explanation and farewell.

Dear Barney:

I have found that I must leave at once for my home. I must ask you to trust me and to believe that in going, I am acting not upon impulse but after the most serious thought I have ever given to any action. Some time later, I shall know how to explain what must seem madness to you. Now I can not. And you will not make what I have to do harder by following me, will you?

Where you are and how you are and what you are doing remain with me the most important things in my life; so you must let me know all about yourself. My address will be Sheridan, Wyoming.

ETHEL.

Amazing and stupefying as was this sudden change, yet it never seemed madness to Barney, nor was it even a moment inexplicable. It was what he was to expect, he said to himself. "She thought me dead when she realized what she had done; and of course she couldn't have me."

After his hours of walking the streets, he threw himself across his bed in his room and tried to think.

He seemed to be a little boy again, in ragged shirt and rousers, sitting beside Azen Mabo on the back of the rude, Indian-made wagon, driving into Chetumal with bark canoes and reed baskets to sell; and Ethel seemed to him one of the little girls, fair and gay in light summer dresses, who gazed at him curiously for a moment and then looked away and forgot him. His Indian upbringing of those early years had fastened upon him a fatalism by which he was apt to interpret events as the result of omens; and to-day he took that memory as a portent of his life. "Of course I should have known," he repeated. "They looked at me and looked away."

As he lay there, memories also crowded back to him of the good Franciscan fathers who talked to him about himself when he was a boy. The holy Fathers he knew, themselves did not marry; and this was because marriage was of the flesh; and it seemed that children were born "in sin"; and Barney discovered that he himself was considered to have been born of a particularly odious sin. Undoubtedly his mother had suffered for it, though the good Saviour, who himself had been merciful to the Magdalene, may have forgiven her; undoubtedly his father either had suffered or was sure to pay penance; and, also, Barney himself

must suffer to escape the *kagige kotagitowin* — the damnation forever.

There was much about this which the boy of course could not understand, but of that which he comprehended so much seemed unfair that, as soon as he could read the *Enamiad Gegikimind*, he searched the Scriptures for hope for himself. Yet it was sternness and austerity which the good fathers enjoined, — which they were obliged to enjoin particularly in those matters of morality with which the seventh commandment is concerned. So, although Barney left Azen Mabo's house early in his adolescence, yet he carried with him the effect of the Indian dreads and superstitions. When he thought of his mother as dead, he trembled at the fear of her having died perhaps without full *kotagiidisowin*, — penance for sins confessed; and reproach for his parent's evident sin was kept alive in Barney's soul. Many a time, when lonely and brooding, the little boy considered preparing for Holy Orders and subjecting himself to the disciplines and severities of the Franciscans; and, in certain moods of self-examination, this thought clung to him up to the year when the war called him.

When he had come through the war morally clean — for in spite of the women in France and England who gladly gave themselves to such as he, Barney came through clean — he had imagined himself as perhaps absolved at last from effects of that sin in which he had been born; and his meeting with Ethel had appeared to him as evidence of his absolution. Their encounter seemed arranged, not by themselves, but by souls in Heaven; at once, when he told her about himself, she had disregarded all thought of damnation of him: and he had loved, — loved with such passion as

he had never suspected himself of capacity to possess and she had loved in return. And now?

He sat up and pulled himself together. What happened, he said to himself, had proved simply another trial ordained for his confusion. He had dared to love, to loose the fleshly desires of *missawenim* which had destroyed his mother. Now he must continue to love; and know no love.

He reread his lover's letter. She had no need to tell him not to follow her. He was sure that he understood too well her reasons for flight; and he blamed her not at all. The wonder was, not that she had now fled from him, but that she had submitted herself to so much for him,—to hostility of all her own people when he had stood alone with him against them. It had come too much for her.

He closed his eyes, thinking of her, kind and sweet and gentle to him always; he thought of how she had given herself to his arms, how he had held her and kissed her, and she had clung to him; and something of the mystic and the magic of his Indian rearing recaptured him; and he thought of Ethel, though saved by souls — *manitos* — to try him, yet of herself *binis* having loved him — and of herself loving him yet, perhaps? — though the superior spirits again had drawn her away.

Then, sitting up and banishing such fancies, he thought of her grandfather and Kincheloe and James Quinlan, who was dead, and of the other Culler. What should he do about them? And about the house on the Rock? Well, nothing just now. He formed no real decision; he merely found himself disinclined to press further at once. He had been proceeding so completely in partnership with Ethel that her will

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drawal forced him to take time for readjustment of his present rights and duties and responsibilities. Moreover, was it not possible that she might return to him as suddenly and as unaccountably as she had departed?

Accordingly for the next few days Lucas's operative, who was keeping an eye on Barney, reported nothing more threatening to Lucas than the fact that Lou-trelle called at some time every day at the Scott Street house and inquired for Ethel Carew. This apparent paralysis of hostile action proved so reassuring to Lucas that gradually his and his operative's vigilance relaxed; and Barney happened to be unobserved upon the particular occasion when, upon presenting himself at the Scott Street house, he was invited in, as Mrs. Wain wished to speak to him.

Barney entered the drawing-room and waited, palpitantly, certain that at last he was to receive some word from Ethel. When the housekeeper entered, she carried no envelope; but her agitation was so great that Barney demanded in alarm: "What has happened to Miss Carew?"

"Nothing — nothing I know of, sir," Mrs. Wain assured, succeeding in better controlling herself. "It is something quite different, sir. Will you sit down, please?"

Barney complied, aware that until he was seated the gray, little housekeeper would not sit down; and she was so unsteady that she was grasping a chair-back for support.

"I speak to you, sir," she said breathlessly, after she had sunk into the seat, "upon my own responsibility, sir, entirely. I have no right to speak, sir; no authority. So I must ask you, before I say another

word, to give me your word as a gentleman that will make no use of what I shall tell — unless I ask you."

Barney felt his pulses pounding again; Mrs. Wain knew nothing more of Ethel; but evidently some other event mightily affected her and would affect her. "What is it?" he demanded.

"Your word, sir, or I can do nothing. I cannot take you to her. You may never see her — alive!"

"Her?" said Barney, rising. "See whom? What are you talking about?"

"I cannot tell you that, Mr.— Mr.—" she stammered; yet Barney knew that she had not forgotten her name. Rather he understood that now, for some reason, she would not address him, as previously she had, by that name which long ago he had given himself. "For I do not know what is to happen, sir! If she dies —"

"Not Ethel Carew!" He did not think that; yet he had to wholly dismiss it from his mind.

"No! She — if she dies, then of course I will tell you everything — I mean, sir, the little that I know. But if she does not die, you must know nothing of what you see this day. She would never forgive me if you see; she trusted me and —" the housekeeper broke off in dismay.

Barney seemed stifled and cramped as he stood there staring down at Mrs. Wain. Flashes of blood alternated with paleness in her thin cheeks and on her forehead, and her trembling and her frightened eyes appealed to him piteously. He was not conscious of any purpose other than reaction to the stifling sensation of inaction when he moved away and into the next room where was the picture of Mrs. Oliver Cullen before

which he halted and stared. The housekeeper did not follow him but turned around in her chair and watched him.

"Why did you go there?" she whispered when he returned.

"Go where?" he asked.

"Never mind, sir. Hush!"

"Why?"

"The servants, sir."

Barney silently observed the housekeeper and knew that, in her present agitation, she would trust herself to say nothing more. "What do you want me to do?" he asked.

"You give me the promise I asked, sir?"

"Yes."

"I'm watched, I know, sir," Mrs. Wain said. "By some one of the Cullens. Are you watched too?"

"Yes," said Barney.

"But I know how to avoid it, when I wish. Do you?"

"It's not impossible," Barney replied.

"Then you will meet me, sir — when you're sure you're alone?"

"Where?"

"At the corner of Tenth and Wabash. You know where that is?"

"I'll find it. When?"

"As soon as I can be there, sir."

Barney went immediately downtown and, entering Field's, he waited before an elevator until it was so filled that the attendant would admit only one other person; he went in, ascended a few floors, crossed to the far end of the building, descended and took a street car to Tenth and Wabash. He had to wait on the

corner only a few minutes before Mrs. Wain dived up in a taxi and invited him in.

"St Luke's Hospital," she said to the driver; when the door was closed, she vouchsafed to Barney "She's had another operation; it was performed day before yesterday. She rallied at first but later."

Still the housekeeper gave no intimation of who "she" was; and Barney was aware that direct inquiry would be as vain as it proved at the house.

"I will know her?" he asked.

"No. But whatever you think, you must control yourself, you understand; in her presence, you must control yourself absolutely."

Barney observed that the doorman at the hospital knew Mrs. Wain, and she was passed to the elevator without question, and he, being with her, went unchallenged. They proceeded to a floor where were many private wards, and a nurse admitted them to a large room with a single bed in which lay a woman apparently asleep.

Barney did not know her; when the nurse, who had been beside the bed, moved away, and Mrs. Wain held back and Barney advanced alone, he was not conscious of ever having seen the woman who lay on her side with her profile plain against the pillow. Yet a fluttering of awe — of more than awe — came over him as he halted silently beside the bed.

Not because of the evidence of the imminence of Death; Barney was far too familiar with the hoverings of Death to have that fact alone so tremendously affect him. This emotion which possessed him was amazingly more tumultuous than any like passion of his life. He had felt most deeply before when, in the

second battle of Ypres, his battalion had been in support when the Germans made the first gas attack and his comrades and he had moved forward to hold the line; his closest friend had been badly gassed while Barney himself by some luck had almost escaped harm; and Barney had lain, unable to do anything to help, while the one he loved most in the world was dying.

Why was this moment beside the bed of a strange woman so like that; why, indeed, did it tear at him more mercilessly even than had that?

Not alone because he saw upon her the terrible testimony of agony. Her face, as she lay turned toward him, was beautiful, though illness and intense suffering she had surely endured. Her skin was clear and lovely even in its deathly pallor; her hair — black and abundant — had clung to its luster as had her dark brows and the lashes which lay on her cheek. The ordeal of pain, which had worn the flesh from her cheek bones, had been powerless to destroy the beauty of her forehead, of the line of her nose and the resoluteness of her chin. Her lips were very thin; yet a tint of blood lay in them; they told most pitilessly how she must have suffered and how she had refused to capitulate to pain or to the threat of death. She had fallen into this stupor of sleep — Barney thought — aware that the doctors had given her up; but, with her whole being, she was determined to live. Even now the indomitable soul of her — that essence of her spirit which persisted though consciousness long was gone — was keeping up the fight, Barney felt. And he wanted her to win; oh, how he wanted her to win!

It seemed to him he had never wished so for another's life; and why? Because, for the first time,

he was beside some one who belonged to him by blood. Because she was his — mother?

At first, after this thought overwhelmed him, he started back a little. He feared lest an obsession had troubled his reason. All his life he had been dreaming of his mother; this woman, except that she evidently was the age that his mother must now be, was either particularly like or unlike the mothers of his dreams. His mother!

He looked down, then gazed again at her face. It was like him! Yes; not he alone observed the likeness of profile to his own; the nurse also noticed the resemblance. When Barney had suddenly started back, the nurse had crept quickly forward, apprehensive of some change in her patient's condition. When she saw nothing she looked up questioningly at Barney, and when he shook his head to signify that he had seen nothing new or alarming, still the nurse gazed at him intently, and when she turned away it was to scrutinize the face of the sleeping woman with new understanding.

"My mother!" Barney's lips formed to himself. "Mother!"

Yet now he had to know beyond speculation. He saw that Mrs. Wain was just within the door; so he dropped back to her and turned to her in an appeal which she could not refuse. "She is my mother?"

"Your mother, sir," the housekeeper said. "If she calls you in her sleep, sir — or awake, if she says Dick, she means you, sir. Dick — you understand?"

"I understand," Barney whispered. "You mean she has been asking for me?"

"When she did not know it, she asked for you. 'Dick, my baby; my boy — Dick,' she said this morning. That was why I brought you."

Barney's eyes dimmed. "How long has she been here?"

"Almost three weeks."

"But not like this?"

"No, sir; this is the result of the operation of yesterday."

"How long has she been ill?"

"Since the injury, sir, when the ship was torpedoed."

"What ship?"

"The ship that she was going back to France on, sir, last September to find you. *The Gallantic*."

"To find me?" Barney repeated dazedly. He had heard of the *Gallantic*, he knew, in some connection with himself or with Ethel Carew or with the Cullens, recently; but in the whirl of his passions, the name bore no near significance.

"Yes, sir. You see, Mr. Dick, she'd just got track of you at last. All your life, for twenty-three years, she'd been searching for you; and then —" Mrs. Wain stopped.

"Did she know last week — before the operation — where I was?"

"Oh, yes, sir."

"Why — why didn't she send —" he began, but he did not finish; he could not challenge his mother now. He had found her; so he went close once more beside her. He did not even look again at Mrs. Wain nor was he conscious longer of the presence of the nurse. He thought of himself as alone with his mother: indeed, after a few moments he was alone, for Mrs. Wain and the nurse withdrew. But they had passed far from Barney's perceptions.

Standing again beside his mother, he seemed to see her, not only as she was now, but as she had been when

she had given him life. Of her, he knew from ordinary sources of information that, twenty-three years ago, she had left him with a nomad Chippewa fisher called Noah Jo and left with him a ring; since that time she had been searching for him, during all his life. A few months ago, when he was still in France, she "got track" of him and was on her way to find him when her ship was torpedoed and she was injured. With this knowledge gained years ago from Azen M. and just now from Mrs. Wain, there blended in Barney's soul the story of his mother and himself told through the medium. He had never questioned that; still, he did not care to question it now. It let him see his mother very clearly when she was a girl,— a beautiful, brave, forsaken girl, big with her baby about to be born, stumbling to the edge of the water on the shore of Huron near St. Florentin. The trees above were bare, Barney knew; the ground was cold and covered with the melting snows; for it was April,— the month of the breaking snowshoes; and there she was, heavy with the burden beneath her coat — lonely, very weak — stumbling and afraid. "She looked upon the water and seemed to think to cast herself in."

No, she did not think of that, Barney now was sure, or if she did, it was only in a flash of weakness. The Indian woman, his mother, could never have been really weak. She could never have long thought about giving up. The Indian appeared in the canoe and took her in and ferried her across the narrow channel — *ajawaodjiga* — to the lonely rock where was his hut. There, alone with the Indian woman, she had given birth to her baby,— to him, Barney. She had called him "Dick."

That was the name given in that letter from Huston which had sent him first to Resurrection Rock; no

Mrs. Wain had said it too. When his mother did not know she was speaking, she had asked for him by the name of "Dick. her baby; her boy — Dick!" There on the rock, he had been her baby; her lips — those pale lips set firm even in her stupor and which told that she still fought for life — had been soft and young and warm then and kissed him; her hands had held him; her breasts had given him suck. Then she had fallen sick again, and in the autumn, in the moon of the gathering of the wild rice, she had had to go away; but she said she would come back.

For some reason — most probably because that sickness had endured and become more desperate than she had expected — she had been unable to keep her word. But she had tried to come back to him, Barney was very sure. Undoubtedly she had come back to the Rock as soon as she was able; but Noah Jo had departed then, taking her baby; he was lost.

So his mother had set herself to this lifelong task of finding him; for twenty-three years she had searched; she had set the watch upon the Rock; she had built the house there; she had gone about herself. Suddenly Barney started again with hot thrills of joy coursing his veins. He knew his mother now; that is, he knew that once, at least, he had spoken to her and she to him; his hand had been in hers when she was strong and warm. He had never forgotten that! She was that woman of whom he had told Ethel, — the woman who had come to the camp of the Canadians in rest billets near Amiens and had gone about speaking a few words with every man. That was she, his mother; and now Barney knew what she had been doing. She had been searching, then, searching through the armies for him. She had actually found him; but

she had not known it then. No more had he. His mother had spoken with him and touched him; and she had spoken with her and taken her hand in his; and neither, then, had known!

But somehow, later, she had found out. For she had been on her way to him in France again when her ship had been torpedoed and she was hurt. It was the *Gallantic*, that was. Ethel's cousin, Agnes, and Oliver Cullen, had been on the *Gallantic*. But she had been lost. Drowned? No; that was disputed; but only; fate yet unknown.

Now Barney controlled himself to try to think clearly. Mrs. Oliver Cullen was dead; at least everyone supposed her dead; yet it was her portrait which Barney had said, was also the portrait of the woman of the camp at Amiens. How could that be? It was that was his mother; and she, though very ill, was alive. How could his mother — the girl who had left home with Noah Jo — have become Mrs. Oliver Cullen? Why, if she had not died on the *Gallantic* five months ago, did not the Cullens know it? Why had he not known it before?

Yet it was plain that this, his mother, also was Mrs. Oliver Cullen. How else was Mrs. Wain involved? how else had it been Mrs. Oliver Cullen's housekeeper who had brought him here? Oh, yes; the identity was perfectly plain now. The house on Scott Street, where he had been, was his mother's; Mrs. Oliver Cullen had obtained that group photograph of officers because she was in it; his mother was the woman whom Ethel Cullen and all this city, it seemed — except Lucas Cullen and his sons — had admired and loved as Mrs. Cullen.

Barney stood still gazing at her till he found himself going all weak within for love and pride in her.

his mother who had searched for him all his life. He dared not even touch her as she lay there in stupor, battling with death; but he sank to his knees beside her.

"Mother, I said," he whispered, "I said before ever I knew who you were that I never saw a finer face. That was when I saw you only in the portrait. I never forgot that night you came to the camp; Mother! But you were not even then as fine as now. You could do no wrong; you never did wrong! I always knew it; my mother!"

In his ecstasy, triumph came to him,—triumph over all those who, throughout his life, had pitied him for his birth, condemning his mother without knowledge. Always, even when a little boy, Barney had absolved her from sin; as yet he understood no more; indeed, all that he had learned had made the manner of his birth more perplexing to him; but now he knew in his heart that as he had always had faith, his mother had done no wrong.

Some one was opening the door, and Barney gently arose; but for a moment more, he bent over his mother. So softly as not possibly to stir her, he brought his lips to her hair; then, turning, he confronted a doctor and the nurse. Something was to be done; and Barney withdrew to a vacant room where alone he awaited the result.

Part of the time he prayed for life for his mother, now praying mutely, as in war he had learned to pray, communing with the great, impersonal Imbuement of Life and Good to give his mother strength and to restore her; and then he prayed like a little boy, in the frightened, imploring petition to the jealous I am the Lord, Thy God,—to the Kijé-Manito of his child-

hood and of Azen Mabo and the Franciscan Father. At other moments, he stood listening to the step of the hallway which might be some one from his mother's room.

At last a surgeon came and told him that "the patient" had gained a little; her pulse and respiration were more favorable. There would probably be "further change" within twenty-four hours. Nevertheless Barney waited, until late in the evening; there was no further change except that his mother was sleeping more normally; then he went out.

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CHAPTER XIX

LUCAS WALKS BY THE LAKE

HE had intended, earlier in the day, to seek Mrs. Wain again as soon as possible and beg her for more information of his mother; but he realized, later, that now that he knew his mother was Mrs. Oliver Cullen, a great deal of news about her awaited him without asking any one's indulgence. So Barney went from the hospital to the public library where he obtained the newspaper files for September which reported the loss of the *Gallantic* with Mrs. Oliver Cullen, and which detailed, in long columns, the many interests and activities of her vigorous life.

There were several pictures of her which Barney had not previously seen, reproductions of photographs taken at important social and civic ceremonies. The biographical sketch began with the year when she came to Chicago "from nowhere" and obtained her first position in the office on Wabash Avenue; it related how she went to the Cullen offices and was dismissed; how Oliver Cullen had fallen in love with her and married her; it mentioned discreetly the fact of the Cullen family estrangement, the struggle for the possession of power; the swift and spectacular rise of the Oliver Cullen fortunes following his marriage; the assumption of the control of the family by his wife; her war work and then the circumstances of her sudden "death."

There was some mention of her in the newspapers for

many days following the first report of the *Galla* disaster, particularly when Oliver's death caused publishing of his obituary and extensive review of wife's activities; and during the following days, papers had given a good deal of space to the remarkable situation brought about by Oliver's death and lack of legal proof of the prior death of his wife. by any chance, she had happened to survive the war and could have been proved to be living five days later — even though afterwards she expired — obviously the Oliver Cullen properties belonged to her heirs. And who were they? No one knew. There was a column of "the most important properties" in a separate column, and Barney whistled to himself when he ran it over and saw the totals, in millions, of their estimated present value. What a stake, he thought, even for a rich man like Lucas Cullen to fight for! What a stake for unknown "heirs" to claim. But it belonged of course, to that woman who lay, barely breathing in the hospital bed. His mother! This property that if she had died, would have been — his?

He had to put down the newspaper file for a moment and walk to the dark window and stare out at the city street to get better possession of his emotions. He had much of that, which had seemed hopelessly confused before, was beginning to become plain. Lucas Cullen — Barney thought — had believed his mother dead but he had known that he, who called himself Barney Loutrelle, was her son. Some one else had known that — James Quinlan — who had gone to meet him at Resurrection Rock. Old Lucas knew that, too. Now that he, Barney, could not find out that he was Agnes Cullen's son, he would give no trouble to Lucas; so the other man tried, first, to draw him away; failing that, or

Lucas had Kincheloe silence James Quinlan forever. Old Lucas chose that night to have Quinlan silenced rather than Barney — so Barney was thinking — because Barney would be harmless without Quinlan but Quinlan, besides knowing about Barney, probably knew other inconvenient things also.

Barney returned to the newspapers but only to glance over them in review. The question as to who had sent James Quinlan to Resurrection Rock was beginning to find an answer in Barney's mind. If his mother had been at the bottom of that, might she also have caused those messages to be sent him? Mrs. Wain had said that his mother was on her way to find him, after having "got track" of him, when she was lost on the *Gallantic*, which had sunk in English waters. Several different vessels had picked up the survivors from boats and rafts and wreckage and brought the people to England; so Agnes Cullen — concealing her identity for reasons not yet to be known — must have been in England when Barney was there in October. Likely enough, she had been at a London hospital, not far from the house of the medium who amazed Barney by possessing many facts of his boyhood. These were all facts which — as he had said to Ethel, when telling her of it — could have been learned naturally by any one who might have taken the trouble to visit Boyne City and inquire about him; but Barney had not been able to imagine that there could be any one in London who would have gone to that trouble. But he could imagine his mother — Mrs. Oliver Cullen who, after twenty-three years' search, had "got track" of her son — collecting the facts to make certain his identity. Had she supplied them to the medium? If, so, why had she? If she knew of his presence in London and

that he was visiting a certain medium, why had she sent for him? Or had she sent for him? That she really been the author of those remarkable letters which Huston Adley had dispatched to him and had summoned him to Resurrection Rock? Might his mother have been the human agent behind much of which had been to Ethel and to himself inexplicable?

He longed for Ethel to share his marvellous discovery with him. He recollected the admiration and trust and love which Ethel had held for "Cousin Agnes"; and he thought, if she could only know that Cousin Agnes was his mother, she might feel differently about him. Of course nothing which he had yet learned disclosed the circumstances of his mother's adventures before his birth; those circumstances which remained suggested only by his ring. But it was plain that Resurrection Rock and the neighborhood of St. Florence was the "nowhere" from which Agnes Dehan had come to Chicago. That being the case, in all likelihood the Cullens had known about her first adventures in love; likely enough it had underlain old John Cullen's dismissal of her from his office; yet his son Oliver — who also would have been told about her — had married her.

Late in the evening as it was, Barney went from the library to Scott Street and presented himself at the house which was his mother's and asked for Mrs. W. While waiting for the housekeeper to appear, he went into the room where hung his mother's portrait and stood reverently studying it. She had been beautiful, he repeated to himself; and much more than that: resolute, determined beyond any other woman whom he had known. The artist had caught, too, something haunting her eyes, those eyes which Barney had seen to-day

closed but which had looked into his two years ago. Something haunting her — what? The loss of him, her son? That was part of it, perhaps; but not all. Else, now that she had found him, why had she not sent for him? Why — though living — did she let all the world suppose her dead?

The entrance of the housekeeper put an end to his self queries. "Nothing more has happened, Mrs. Wain," Barney said to her at once to quiet the alarm which his appearance at that hour had roused. "She" — he hesitated and then did not name his mother, but repeated — "she was gaining strength when I left. They had more hope. I went from the hospital to the library and read what the newspapers had to say about her last September," he continued. "Of course, I understand much more than I did this morning; but of course I want to know everything — everything you can tell me."

For a moment the housekeeper stared at him, uncertainly, not quite recovered from her shock of alarm; then, realizing his words, she advanced to him suddenly and grasped the lapel of his coat. "Listen, Mr. Dick!" she whispered. "I've broken my given word to her now; but I thought she was going: God gives me testimony to that! Oh, it is all between her and him, don't you see? It's always been between her and him," the housekeeper iterated incoherently, "between her and him —"

"Her and — God?" Barney asked, bewildered.

"God?" the housekeeper repeated and laughed. "The Devil on earth himself; Mr. Lucas Cullen, Senior! Don't you see? She's fought him since she was a child, a little girl, sir, and he downed her; he disgraced her and — and she lost you! Then she came here and

beat him — beat him — beat him and his family them; she beat them all. But she couldn't find y she couldn't —" the housekeeper stopped. "Li she appealed again, steadying herself. "She you last fall, I told you; then that happened; they thought she was dead; so she let them thi was dead, to beat them — beat them so they never down her again. But he did it. He cam the other day; that day Ethel Carew left — r ber?"

"I remember," Barney said.

"He thinks he's safe now; for he's beaten you. But he's not beaten her. He thinks he has; f thinks she is dead. But she's going to get wel fight him for you and for her. She told them to her or kill her that day after he came here; so took her to the table again. And now I must te what I've done; I've brought you to see her. So send for you soon; she'll tell you what she sh trust her and wait!"

The housekeeper stood back from him; and Ba found within him no will to make further demands her, except:

"There is one thing I can ask you and you can me, I think, without breaking trust, Mrs. Wain. V I was in London last October, was she also there?"

"Yes, Mr. Dick."

"I received, at that time, communication through a medium which told me a good deal about myself; she concerned in that?"

"Once," said Mrs. Wain. "Once she sent woro you through a medium; she thought she was going die; she was herself in terrible pain — horrible, Dick, and constant. She knew you were near; but

would not send for you. She knew you were wounded yourself; you were just recovering; you were to go back in battle; she could not bring you to her as she was. But she had to send word to you; so she did, through a medium."

"I see," said Barney. "But only once, you said."

"Once, she told me. After that, she had nothing to do with the messages to you; whatever you got, or Miss Ethel got from her father, Mrs. Cullen knew nothing about till after they were sent."

The housekeeper, as though distrusting herself, opened the doors which she had secured and slipped away. Barney made no effort to recall her. For many minutes, left alone, he remained in the room before his mother's portrait. "Since she was a little girl, she fought him," he repeated to himself; and his thoughts went to what Ethel had told him of her grandfather's life in the northern woods long ago when James Quinlan — he of the flaming torch — had been a sawyer for Lucas Cullen, and something had happened which had given J. Q. a hold on Cullen which Lucas had not broken until that night Kincheloe went to Resurrection Rock. Barney began more clearly to understand; and what he comprehended was that the matter of his birth and the giving of him to Noah Jo and the loss of him were only incidents in the struggle between his mother and Lucas Cullen which had been going on long before he was born.

For a time, on account of her desperate injuries, his mother had been obliged to relinquish the fight; and in that emergency it seemed — yes, it seemed — that after his mother had sent him a message through the medium in London, somehow the spirits of the dead had endeavored to continue her struggle by summoning him

and enlisting Ethel Carew with him in the fight, now his mother was returning to the combat. She alone of the living, besides her lifelong enemy, all the elements of that contest; so when, at last, he returned to his room, it was with the decision to trust his mother and to wait.

Yet this day had struck from him the paralysis of action which Ethel's departure had caused. He had written to Ethel, in Sheridan, only a purely personal acknowledgment of her farewell to him and assured that he "understood" and would always "understand" anything she might do; and he would always love her. Now he wrote her that, after doing nothing for several days, he was busy again with the investigation which they had shared together, and he had unexpectedly undergone a remarkable experience, which he did not otherwise describe. The next day he received from Ethel a short letter which had crossed the Atlantic, which informed him that she had arrived safely in Sheridan and was very well and busy.

He learned through Mrs. Wain that his mother, though still desperately weak, was conscious; and that after during the week she continued to slowly gain strength. Mrs. Wain informed him that she had confessed to Mrs. Cullen how she had brought Barnard to the hospital; and though his mother continued unconscious and was now almost free from pain and was conscious in her mind, the physicians forbade her the risk of a tremendous emotional disturbance certain to follow a meeting with her son. Indeed, Mrs. Wain said that Mrs. Cullen clearly comprehended the situation and realized that she could not afford, at this crisis, to exhaust her slight vitality. She had immediate need of all her powers to think and to plan; she had kept

self informed of Barney's movements since he had been in America, but she wished particularly a detailed report upon certain matters which he had observed. Accordingly Barney sat up most of one night writing out replies to his mother's queries; and the next noon he received from her a dictated letter of instruction which sent him, for the first time, to the apartment of Lucas Cullen, Junior, on the outer Drive, where he asked to see Mr. Lucas Cullen, Senior.

Old Lucas proved to be out—"taking a walk, I think, sir," the servant volunteered. Probably he would be back during the afternoon. Barney said he would return at half-past three and he left his name, which Lucas learned when he came back, sometime before three.

"Mr. Loutrelle to see me, eh?" he repeated. "Mr. Loutrelle? Indeed! He'll be back in an hour? Now that's very kind of him. Tell him, if I don't happen to be in precisely at half-past three, that it was very kind of him to call twice to see me in one afternoon." And Lucas passed into the apartment only to refill a pocket with cigars before he went out again to walk along the lake front.

It was a warm afternoon for Chicago in February; the recent snows had thawed away from the ground except in little drip-stained patches shadowed by the tall buildings of "Streeterville." The ice sheath over the breakwater escarpments protecting this invaluable, newly made land also was melting and dripping, and the snow and spray hummocks over the water's edge were breaking up and falling, becoming floes which turned and skewed and sucked and sobbed with the wash of the waves rolling below as the wet wind blew out of the east.

Old Lucas lit a fresh cigar and, puffing at it, strode vigorously southward beside the water, looking down at the grinding floes. He became absent-minded as he stared at the ice and water, and suddenly, with a jerk of his shoulders, he looked up and all around him, though some one, if near by, might have been cavedrilling on his thoughts. But no one was about, except the occupants of hurrying motor cars on the Drive to his right.

He came to the great, imposing jetty of the Municipal Pier, extending out half a mile into the lake, and crossed to the south walk of the pier, where the sunshine was warmest, and proceeded to the furthermost point, where he stood gazing out at the spray-swamp moles forming the harbor defenses, at the lighthouses marking the passages, and at the steamer hurling white spume before it as it approached the city. Turning, Chicago lay before him, its water front cleanly etched in this afternoon of sunshine, with the lake wind blowing the smoke and dust far to the west.

Lucas's keen old eyes rested momentarily upon the river mouth with the Life Saving Station at the flank. He watched critically the progress of a powerful, deep-water tug ploughing, unhindered, through the field of ice cakes which the current was drawing into the river. Then, roving as he stared, he considered the great abrupt row of mighty buildings rising before the water and beyond them the block after block, mile after mile of the city, too huge to be visible even from such a vantage point as his but hinted at by the aura of haze hanging, opalescent, as far as the eye followed under the western sun.

Lucas gazed at it, mute with unwilling wonder; then he bit his cigar savagely and was turning away when

noticed that a young man in new gray coat and hat had approached.

"Oh, you!" Lucas recognized Barney. "Where's your uniform?" he demanded; but his emotions upon gazing at the city had been so deep that he could not at once transfer his thought even to this young man.

"I've seen that town flat as a burnt pancake, young fellow," he said with boastful reverie. "I steered a ship into that river there — when it was running the right way, not into the Mississippi — when there wasn't a roof between hell and heaven and they were camped like Indians on the ruins. But they had their nerve; they got about rebuilding; so they had to have wood — a city of wood right away. So we brought it to 'em. Some of the fools gave it away; yes, young fellow, those born fools took their ships to Muskegon and Manistee and Frankfort and Big Traverse and East Jordan and loaded up with good, clear white pine, such as you never saw, and sold it for the cost of cutting and carrying; nothing for the lumber at all. But some of us had some sense. — Well, young fellow, you came to call on me this afternoon; what about?"

Barney had not flattered himself with any thought that his appearance would bring the slightest evidence of dismay to Lucas Cullen; nevertheless the more than condescending — indeed casual — manner in which the old man met him disconcerted Barney for a moment. Also, he had not expected to speak to Lucas in such a spot as the end of the pier; yet they were quite alone, and there was no reason for not talking.

"I came to speak to you about Kincheloe," Barney said.

"Eh? Kincheloe?" Lucas repeated, attempting to convey surprise without the slightest concern but not

wholly succeeding. "What's he been up to now? Done anything to you?" Lucas essayed raillery.

"We both know perfectly well what he did," Barney replied. "He killed James Quinlan at Resurrection Rock the night I arrived there. For that reason, he must be locked up."

Lucas mouthed his cigar while his squinted eyes studied Barney. He had long been fully aware, from the reports which Bennet had brought him, that this fellow who had named himself Loutrelle, and Ethel both believed that Kincheloe had killed James Quinlan; yet no one had directly made the charge to Lucas before this. Also there was a quietness of statement of accepted fact about this accusation which made it contrast with Ethel's excited charge against him.

Loutrelle, by his waiting, showed that he expected denial or some comment or ejaculation; but Lucas merely continued to squint.

"Of course," Barney continued then, without encouragement, "he acted with your knowledge. You were with him as accessory to murder as you were when you sent Quinlan from Galilee with his torch for Henry Laylor."

Lucas's cigar dropped from his mouth; the impact of his pulses rat-tatted in his brain, in the bend of his elbows, in his fingers and down to his toes. He remained mute, continuing to stare, not because of choice; he could not have spoken now.

"But I do not mean yet to ask a warrant for you," this young fellow called Loutrelle went on. "You can always be found; but Kincheloe is different. You are having dealings with him and can have him locked up on some technical charge — theft, forgery, anything which will keep him in jail. If you do this, it will not be

necessary to swear out charges against him and you in Michigan."

Lucas quivered with impulse suddenly to hurl this fellow into the icy water; indeed, he seemed to betray it; or perhaps only from instinctive caution did Barney move about so that his back was no longer to the lake. Unable to act, Lucas boggled for something adequate to say; but he could not reply forcibly without knowing exactly how much proof this fellow possessed. Loutrelle, however, appeared neither to care for response from him nor to say anything more himself. He merely waited a moment, looking at Lucas, then nodded and took himself off.

Lucas stood squinting at the back of the young fellow while, without once looking around, Loutrelle walked half the length of the pier; he vanished into a doorway, and still Lucas remained staring. He looked down and kicked his cigar into the lake, took another from his pocket and started to chew it.

"Laylor: he said Henry Laylor," Lucas repeated to himself, as though now likely to doubt the evidence of his own ears. "Where in hell did he get that?"

Lucas knew where he had "got" Galilee and the flaming torch; so Henry Laylor evidently came from the same place, which appeared to be a locality of indefinitely expanding information. Yet information obtained from such a source, though admittedly disconcerting when suddenly disclosed, was not actually dangerous,—that is, it would not do much harm on a warrant. Loutrelle knew that, unless he was crazy; so his threat was only a bluff; if the sudden mentioning of Quinlan and Galilee and Laylor all together had not upset Lucas, he would instantly have recognized it. Also Loutrelle was powerless to bring dangerous evi-

dence of recent wrong-doing either by Kincheloe or himself without Ethel's witness of what she had seen in his house at St. Florentin. Yet the linking up of this affair at the Rock with that of Galilee exposed elements of peril which were new.

Lucas left the pier, calculating these; and strode toward his son's apartment. He had not the slightest idea of locking up Kincheloe; for in the catalogue of Lucas's failings, betrayal of a confederate held no place. But perhaps it would be a good thing to get Kincheloe well out of the way, not alone for Kincheloe's sake but for Lucas's own. For no one knew better than Lucas the weaknesses of Miss Platt's husband and the unlikelihood of his thinking clearly and sanely in an emergency. Suppose this fellow, who called himself Loutrelle, and his attorneys, or whoever else might be acted with him got hold of Kincheloe and told him what they knew about Lucas Cullen, Kincheloe undoubtedly would blow up; he would not be capable of discriminating between what they could and could not prove against Kincheloe — lacking any reliable tradition of fidelity to his partner in wrong-doing — was too apt to turn State's evidence to save himself.

Lucas accelerated his pace till he reached a street car which took him downtown where he obtained a considerable sum of money in bank notes. Not knowing precisely where Kincheloe now abode, he telephoned Kincheloe's lawyer friend, Dougherty, and, obtaining an address, he engaged a taxicab and drove five or six miles north into that extraordinary and wide-spread district of indulgence and light living which is known to many of its inhabitants as "Little Paris" and which was Kincheloe's delight.

The car passed new, gaudy apartment hotels with

frequent cafeterias, beauty shops, confectioneries and gay windows already brilliant with electric lights against the dusk of the wintry day; it turned a corner or two and finally halted before an imposing establishment boasting a liveried ducky, who hastened to spare Lucas the exertion of opening the cab door. After Lucas had alighted, the doorman looked within the cab as though certain some one must have accompanied the gentleman and then, turning, smirked at Lucas with obvious significance as he inquired, "Who fo', sah?"

Lucas disgustedly elbowed him aside and, entering a glittering, tiled vestibule, he ascended the stairs to the second floor, where he passed along a softly lit, thickly carpeted hallway to the fourth door on the right and rang the bell.

The number of apartments opening into this one hall indicated that this was a building which architecturally was Lucas's pet abomination,—a structure of two-room flats; and the character of the occupants was so plain to Lucas that when, after several moments, a girl opened the door before him, Lucas gazed at her with a disdain which contained no great element of surprise.

CHAPTER XX

AND CALLS UPON A YELLOW CANARY

SHE was about twenty, Lucas thought, a supple limbed young thing with brownish hair which had been carefully "waved" but which was rather awry at the present moment; she had dark brows, pencilled and depilated to arch in a narrow black curve; her lashes evidently had been treated, and her lips carmined; she had characterless, but not unattractive, gray eyes; a too small but pert nose; a weak, pretty chin and small white teeth which showed when she parted her lips as she looked up at the tall stranger. She displayed too — and not unintentionally — the whiteness of her neck and shoulders and the roundness of her small, firm busts. She was clad outwardly in a marvellous kimono-like silken garment with much lace and ribbons which she had fastened only at her waist, underneath she wore a half transparent pink blouse of some grotesque pyjama suit, and pantaloons of which extended below her kimono, leaving bare her ankles; her small, slender feet, bare, were thrust into those senseless, heelless satin creations which — Lucas knew — women called "mules." Evidently she had just arisen from bed.

"Smith here?" Lucas demanded of her curtly.

"Who?" said the girl.

"Your — husband. You're Mrs. Smith, I suppose."

The girl snickered. "Don't be silly. You're —" she looked both ways down the hall and then said cautiously "— Mr. Cullen?"

"Eh?" said Lucas, taken a little aback. "You know me, eh?"

"I've heard about you," the girl corrected. "Do you want to come in?" And she opened the door wider.

Lucas entered, and she shut the door. The windows of the room into which he stepped were protected by double shades, both of which were drawn; but a pink encased electric lamp fairly well illumined an expensively papered, imitation walnut trimmed room of good size furnished with tapestried, walnut chairs, table and telephone stand and stool; what evidently was sometimes a lounge to match now had been extended into a double bed, upon one side of which Miss Platt's husband lay with arms stretched out and head thrown back, sleeping heavily.

"Huh!" Lucas ejaculated with deep disgust. "Drunk, too!"

"What you talking 'bout?" the girl rejoined. "I'm not drunk."

"I didn't say you were," Lucas replied, without looking about at her. "I said he was drunk — on top of being here with you."

"Oh!" said the girl, and snickered again unoffended. "Yes; he's got a perfectly rotten stomach for gin; and he does like riekys." She perched herself unconcernedly on the arm of a chair beside Lucas, displaying even more of her figure; but Lucas did not notice her at all. Though he had talked to Kincheloe several times over the telephone and frequently had sent him money, Lucas had not seen him since he had come to

Chicago, and he had never before seen him with his mussed, his face bloated and twelve hours' growth black beard darkening his face.

"Dougherty 'phoned he thought you was on your way," the girl now volunteered to Lucas, "so I tried to give him a rouse; but nothing was doing. Want a smoke?" And she stretched out a gold-plated case filled with slender cigarettes.

Lucas ignored her.

"Aw, take a look, anyway; you paid for it!" she taunted.

Lucas opened a door near the bed and found a bathroom where he pulled a heavy bath towel from a rack and wet it with cold water; he stepped back before Kincheloe and struck him heavily with the towel across one side of the head and then upon the other.

"Wake up, you lecherous fool!"

Kincheloe jerked violently and startled awake. "Wha's matter? Stop that, what y'doin', Billie!"

"Cullen's here, Johnnie! That's all!" the girl assured between puffs at her cigarettes.

"Goo' morning!" Kincheloe now recognized Lucas who gave him a few moments to further collect himself while Lucas returned to the bathroom and took the door key from the inside and put it in the outside of the lock. Without a word, then, he grabbed the girl by the arm, thrust her into the bathroom and locked the door.

"Look here; what're you doin'?" Kincheloe started up to protest.

Lucas thrust him back in bed. "How much have you told that — of yours?"

"Told *her*?" said Kincheloe in alarm. "Nothing why? What does she know?"

"She knew me," Lucas accused.

"Oh," said Kincheloe. "I told her you and I were friends; you staked me."

"That all?"

Kincheloe nodded, while wiping with his hands the water from his hair and face. His mind was quickly clearing, and he understood that Lucas Cullen's call meant peril. "What's happened, sir?" he appealed.

"Fool!" said Lucas heartily, not in particular reference to Kincheloe's admitted disclosure but in general comment. "Where do you wish to go? Japan; China? Or South America?"

"Why?" Kincheloe begged, cringing.

"Pretty boy! Pretty boy!" said Lucas in contemptuous pity. The man had no nerve at all; and now that he sat straightened and sobered by fright, he looked not old and bloated, but amazingly immature. He was wearing a striped silk sleeping garment, only less flimsy and feminine than his bedfellow's; and now, in spite of his terror, he reached for his hairbrush from the stand near by and nervously began making his toilet.

"I've brought money for you to go to Japan," Lucas continued, arbitrarily choosing the destination for him. "You are going to start right away — to-night. You go to Vancouver and take a boat to Yokohama. Here's some money for you. You will not receive any more until you get it through Yokohama."

Kincheloe stood up, uncertainly, staring at his master vacantly. He did not see Lucas; he saw, instead, monstrous men about to arrest him; he saw a cell with himself in it; the death watch; gallows. He turned to a mirror and meticulously perfected the part in his hair and smoothed the brushing; he picked up a pink powdered burnisher and polished his well mani-

cured nails; then he looked up again to Lucas, and his jaw dropped and his lips parted loosely. "They're after us!" he whispered. "They're after us!"

"Pup!" said Lucas. "You poor puppy, they can never prove anything; but they may try to make you believe. That's why I came here to save you —"

"Save me!"

"If you were one quarter man," Lucas continued less mercifully, but guarding his voice so as not to be overheard at the other side of the bathroom door, "I'd never bother about you. But you're a canary — a yellow canary, dying of fright when the cat comes into the room. They can never hurt you, you fool; but they are going to get out of here. The train to Vancouver leaves to-night; then Yokohama. You'll like Japan and you'll enjoy yourself. Understand they've gone in for victrolas in the East in ways which may be new even to you. Of course, you'll not be held to Japan; there's China, Japan, and most of Asia. I'll take care of you; but you'd better have a more distinctive name than John Smith. Let's see." Lucas considered a moment, and, taking a blank card from his pocket, he wrote, "Gregory Clerkerton, care of the Chartered Bank, India, Australia and China." And he handed the card to Kincheloe. "That'll always reach you, and take care of you; it's branches in Japan — everywhere. Here's two thousand dollars to start. Good-by! that it's to-night. Good-by!"

"Good-by," said Kincheloe stupidly. He seemed not aware of his master's departure until he found himself alone in the room, holding in one hand the card with his name and bank address and in the other a sheaf of money bills. He counted these mechanically; there were twenty notes of one hundred dollars each,

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The girl in the bathroom, who up to this time had remained quiet, began knocking at the door. "Johnnie!" she called.

Kincheloe started about and thrust the card and money into the pockets of his coat which was hanging over the back of a chair; then he went to a drawer for a bottle and drank half a tumbler of raw gin before he unlocked the bathroom door.

"What's the matter between you two?" the girl demanded.

"He thought," said Kincheloe, "he wouldn't come through with any more money; but he did."

"How much?" said the girl.

"Never mind; enough."

"Enough for what?"

"One hell of one good time to-night, Billie! Kiss me! — We're going to have a party; one hell of a party. Kiss me again, Billie — Say, you're all right — you —"

Thus Kincheloe began to disobey. Undoubtedly from the first day of realization of what he had done at Resurrection Rock, he never had believed he long would escape the consequences; he was, as Lucas said, a yellow canary not fit to be chosen for such service as he had performed. And Lucas, having any option, never would have chosen him; but there at St. Florentin he had been the ready instrument at hand. Yet how unfit a man to have killed another! A slayer — a murderer — must summon both courage and contempt for society to keep himself safe; and Kincheloe possessed neither. In his mind, the forces of American justice, instead of being pitifully bungling and stupid and letting the criminal go, became superhuman, inexorable powers; they caught a man sooner or later; and at every moment to the time of his capture, he was

being pursued. Moreover, Kincheloe believed in the theory that a hiding man was always safest in a big city; when he attempted to travel, then he was caught. So that night Kincheloe gave his hell of a party, and it downtown with Billie close at his side; and the night was "wet", very wet indeed, then.

It was some time after two o'clock in the morning when Kincheloe and Billie started to drive "home". Kincheloe was driving his own car, which was a coupe purchased several days earlier with some of the money so readily obtained from Lucas Cullen, Junior. Kincheloe was drunk, and so was Billie. A light, fluffy snow storm was blowing when Kincheloe skidded his car around a corner and on to Michigan Avenue and "stepped on the gas" for a race north. He kept on started driving with one arm about Billie; and he boasted to a friend, as he shut the door, that any car who wanted him would have to travel some that night. So, very drunk and accompanied only by a drowsy girl and certain that officers of the law were after him, he drove north.

At half-past seven on that same morning, Lucas Cullen, Senior, was at breakfast and had finished his daily reading and comment upon Wilson's performance at Versailles, when his eyes roved the less prominent columns to pass over an item headed, "Open Draw Claim Another Victim." His mind was considerably occupied with speculations about Kincheloe whom he supposed had started northwest last night and accordingly was nearing Minneapolis. Lucas was thinking it was a good thing to have got the yellow canary out of the way, when his eye picked up the phrases, "Chartered Bank of India, Australia and China." What was that about? "In his pocket, as sole mark of identification

was a card upon which had been written in pencil, "Gregory Clerkerton, Chartered Bank of —."

It was under that open draw heading; and the paragraphs, when carefully read, related how a new coupé, very recklessly driven, had dashed up the approach of the Rush Street bridge and the driver, disregarding the danger signals, hurled his car through the barrier and into the river. The bodies were recovered and there followed very fair descriptions of Miss Platt's husband and the girl who had been with Kincheloe the afternoon before.

Lucas, though no longer reading, held up the newspaper between himself and his wife; he arose from the table, after a few moments, and strolled into the empty smoking room. So Kincheloe had killed himself! Well, that, in its way, was fair enough. Kincheloe would give no more trouble; and he had ceased to be an element of danger. "No good to any one; never was," Lucas said comfortingly to himself; and he recalled Kincheloe as he lay sleeping off his debauch. But now Lucas also recalled him as he had been at other times,—the handsome and affable, though indolent young man whom Miss Platt's income had attracted; and Lucas's thoughts carved, of their own accord, unwelcome channels. Miss Platt had possessed such alluring income because of her peculiar capacity to serve Lucas Cullen; and Lucas's need of her had come as a result of that crime committed so long ago. How extraordinarily the influence of that persisted, destroying, at last, not only James Quinlan, among others, but entangling and finally snuffing out the poor yellow canary, Kincheloe, and his weak, girlish companion.

Lucas tried to check himself from further ratiocination, but against his own will, his thoughts flowed on.

Kincheloe had not been born when Lucas had met Jarquinlan at Galilee and sent him thence with the flaming torch; yet, at that meeting, the death of the unborn child had been decreed.

It was somewhat astounding to recount, as Lucas found himself doing, the seemingly never-ending, ever-spreading effect of that meeting, originally intended to accomplish but one limited object and stop there. Lucas did not at all wish to let his wife know that Kincheloe was dead, even though the manner of his death made it easily arguable that he had killed himself in a drunken debauch utterly unconnected with Lucas's affairs. Lucas did not relish the prospect of having Kincheloe in the increasing ranks of the dead who had passed on, directly or indirectly, by his action. A little while ago, to know that one was dead was to know that he was "removed"; but that was the case with Lucas no longer. "J.Q." with his flaming torch, had succeeded in registering himself upon another's consciousness; might M. K. do the same?

No; Lucas could not think of Kincheloe as being nearly so "safe" for him as though he were in Yokohama; not so safe, perhaps, as Kincheloe had been yesterday here in Chicago. Lucas jerked himself back to practical considerations. Kincheloe, though not yet identified, sooner or later would be, and perhaps, if things stood, it was to Lucas's advantage that it should be sooner. Kincheloe — Kincheloe who was dead and yet in Lucas's mind, less dead than any one who had previously passed on — might appreciate the respect of immediate identification and care. Moreover, the fellow who called himself Loutrelle, and who threatened trouble, had particularly wished to make sure of

Kincheloe; and knowledge of Kincheloe's death might halt any plans Loutrelle had on hand.

Lucas waited until his son appeared and, having breakfasted, was ready to start downtown. "This looks to me," said Lucas to Luke, showing the paragraph, "like our friend Kincheloe."

"The name they say," said Luke, "is Clerkerton."

"That was a friend of Kincheloe's," Lucas said. "I've heard him mentioned."

"Oh!" said Luke. "I'll send some one over from the office to identify him."

Accordingly the afternoon newspapers printed the fact that the man lost in the river "with a girl" had been one Merrill Kincheloe, who had been of the household of Lucas Cullen, Senior, now of St. Florentin. Mrs. Kincheloe, who was Mr. Cullen's secretary, was at St. Florentin but had been wired for.

Barney read this item that afternoon; and three days later Ethel, in Sheridan, opened a fat envelope addressed to her in Barney's writing to discover within clippings from Chicago papers which related all the publicly discoverable facts of Kincheloe's life and of the manner of his death. Barney had added only a few lines, saying that he was well and very busy and hoped before long to be able to write to her more fully; he thanked her for the few brief letters she had written him recounting her occupations.

He had made no comment whatever about Kincheloe's death; and though Ethel experienced, with the reading of the clippings, the shock which inevitably comes when one learns of the destruction of a person whom one has known well, yet the succeeding sensation partook of relief. For Kincheloe, even though the tool of her grandfather, had been a murderer and, during her days

in Chicago, she had been obliged to think of herself working for fit punishment for him. To know that was dead ended for Ethel the sense of recreancy in duty to proceed against him. Fate or Providence or Chance, if you chose that appellation — had disposed of Kincheloe, she thought. Could the same powers be depended upon to punish, also fittingly, grandfather?

In his case, she thought of those Powers as less personal; she thought of the soul of her father, of boy Bob who had wished Quinlan to tell and then "J.Q." himself with the flaming torch; and her sense of abandonment of them was lessened by the clear information given in Barney's brief phrases that he was absorbed in the business which they had begun together. This last letter, like the preceding ones, indicated progress and made her long to know and to act. But she, on her part, was very busy; not only in Sheidan but in traveling about from one of her father's properties to another.

It is a peculiar quality of a lie suggested (and Quinlan knew this peculiarity well) that it finds, in the mind of the hearer, increasing reinforcement for itself when the baldly declared falsity would encounter even deepening denial; and so it was that Ethel, alone and with many solitary hours for self-examination, continued, unwillingly, to discover within her reflection new fears that what her grandfather told her was true, that Barney was Agnes's and her father's son. The very community of cousin Agnes's and her father's interests in these western developments added proof; as she had herself said to her grandfather, cousin Agnes and her father had had no written agreement; they completely understood each other.

When she had fled to the west, it had seemed to her simply in reaction to the instinct for the refuge of "home"; but now that flight had assumed another object which was to preserve, even by the acceptance and use of Uncle Lucas's willing loans, what had been her father's and cousin Agnes's interest in the western properties. Not for her own sake but for Barney! For she knew that either he would find out some time that he was cousin Agnes's son, or she would tell him. She would give him, she planned, also her father's interest. She never said to herself "his" father's; consciously she always refused that; yet she found herself habitually acting as though she had accepted her grandfather's statement entire.

Her Uncle Lucas, of course, learned that the funds, which he had insisted upon forwarding, were being used and, upon one of the rare occasions when a leisure hour at home coincided with his father's, Luke duly reported that fact.

"Ethel seems to be making the grand tour of Wyoming, Montana and Idaho water powers," he said. "The busiest little business woman in the west. You certainly brought her to her senses," Luke admitted ungrudgingly the amazing effect of his father's single interview with Ethel when all the rest of the family had failed. "What did you say to her?"

Lucas had never told; and he only looked knowing.

"When I saw Jaccard to-day, after he'd seen you, he looked," Luke continued, abandoning that quest, "like a cat who'd eaten the canary. What are —" Luke was continuing, but his father had jerked queerly. Lucas did not like to hear about canaries or talk of them since Kincheloe's death; but he could not explain that to Luke.

"What are you two up to?" Luke persisted after a moment. "Your English ruling arrived?"

"Something better than a ruling," boasted Lucas who had quite recovered himself. "Did you see in the papers to-day that Mrs. Brand, the great English medium, had arrived in New York from London?"

"Yes," said Luke; "why?"

"She's on her way here, we have arranged it. I'll get our ruling here. You will see!" And Lucas came most laconically mystifying, as was his habit when gestating a plan with which he was particularly pleased. But he pretended to more complete gratification than he was experiencing in these days, when, upon suddenly entering Sarah's and his bedroom, he was likely to find her on her knees before a chair, praying — as he well knew — for him as well as for herself. Often he turned about and went out, ignoring her; sometimes he waited until she arose and then, bending very tenderly, he kissed her; but sometimes, too, he interrupted her by catching her arm, firmly but never roughly, and pulling her to her feet.

"You're getting morbid, Sarah!" he explained unsatisfyingly, when her eyes looked into his. "Morbid!"

Miss Platt's grief also absurdly affected him, though he believed that it could not be sincere; for she knew that Kincheloe had never loved her, and she had never really loved him. She had merely wanted a husband, Lucas said; and Kincheloe had proved himself certainly of the most unworthy sort. Yet Miss Platt would not leave Lucas's employ.

She had done this before; and indeed, while in Chicago, Lucas had little need of her; but this was termination, not only of her employment, but of all relations.

between the Cullens and herself. Lucas had not the slightest fear of her failing to keep his confidence; it was solely the insult of her calmly spoken resignation and refusal to discuss reasons for it or conditions of reëmployment. "The insult!" Lucas afterwards repeated hotly to himself.

Did his own son Luke — and also John, who had returned to the city — treat him a little differently since Kincheloe's death? Or did Lucas only imagine it? Probably, Lucas argued with himself, it was because he was overstaying his intended visit; but he did not want to return to St. Florentin; nor did Jaccard wish him to leave Chicago now. So Lucas proposed that Sarah and he go to a hotel, a proposition which young Luke and Myra and all the rest vigorously opposed. Nevertheless Lucas contrarily moved his wife and himself to one of the new hotels near Lincoln Park.

This left him more time to himself to read and to think; and what he continued to read mostly were those irritating, self-undermining books which he had bought at McClurg's; and his meditations dwelt on the same topics which also became a source of discussion between Jaccard and himself.

CHAPTER XXI

A DIFFICULTY WITH HEAVEN

“THE impression which Mrs. Brand has made on New York could scarcely be better for our purpose,” said Jaccard, upon the occasion of one of Lucas’s visits to the many-windowed corner room high up in a Dearborn Avenue office building, where Jaccard schemed and talked. Folded before him were copies of New York newspapers reporting the results of the English medium’s “sittings” attended by many prominent New York people; the Chicago papers also had devoted prominent columns to the telegraphed stories of Mrs. Brand’s messages from the world beyond.

“No,” agreed Lucas, hunching his chair closer, so that he could more comfortably rest his arm on the desk. Jaccard with his foot hooked out a cuspidor and arranged it on the side and fairly between them. He kept it concealed from callers who were not, such as Lucas, old-timers like himself; Jaccard also preferred chewing his cigar to smoking it; indeed, Jaccard kept secreted in his drawer a bit of “plug”, which he now produced and proffered.

Lucas looked at it longingly but shook his head. “No,” he denied himself. “It would ruin me for this,” and he continued to mouth his cigar.

“I won’t make you miserable then,” said Jaccard generously, and restored the chewing tobacco to its hiding place.

He was a tall, square man, Jaccard, kept in good

condition by golf and moderate eating, and apparently unharmed by somewhat immoderate drinking; he was gray, baldish, and his blue eyes required, when he read, pince-nez which he kept on a black ribbon. If one knew nothing of his record, or of his personal habits, he passed for an ascetic, almost Puritanical individual; he had been, in his younger days, a great "jury lawyer"; but it was a generation since he had personally pleaded in any lower court.

"You see she has just been performing in New York the essential act," Jaccard resumed the subject of the medium. "She's been getting evidential messages. You know what they are?"

"Yes," said Lucas; but he knew that Jaccard would explain anyhow.

"Communications which no one can explain unless they came from people that are dead," Jaccard dutifully persisted. "They say mind reading must be absolutely barred out. Now that's precisely what we want her to do. We don't want to get her here in a séance and ask some spook, 'Is Agnes D. Cullen there?' and have the answer come, 'Yes, sir; present.' That's no good to us; we want some speech or answer or evidence which could have come from Agnes D. Cullen and no one else. Then we've something to go on.

"That's not enough to go to court with, even when we get it," Jaccard added hastily. "But it's for the impression — if properly advertised. Most cases are won before the courts open anyway. Any fool knows that. Half the case is the preparation of the jury *before they're picked*. Now we're going to use this spirit stuff to prepare every venireman in the County of Cook, State of Illinois, who can read or hear, with the fact that Agnes D. Cullen not only is dead but has

proved it herself. We will then go to court and a jury picked from competent veniremen of County Cook, State of Illinois, to pass upon the validity of certain material facts, witnessed at the time of the destruction of the *Gallantic*, to have caused the death of Agnes D. Cullen, beyond any reasonable doubt. Now, already they *know* she's dead, how do you think they decide?"

Jaccard previously had convinced Lucas how a jury which he selected, was likely to decide; and Lucas, being fond of crowing himself, had no preference for the taste in juries; so he did not directly reply but regarding his lawyer dubitatively.

"What do you, yourself, think of 'evidential messages,' Jaccard?" he suddenly demanded.

"Think?" said Jaccard. "I've just told you that I will land you eighteen million or so in your lifetime instead of seven years from now — not saying you would live seven years more, however."

"I mean," said Lucas, "what do you think of me, not as a lawyer, but as a man sixty-seven years old?"

"Sixty-six," Jaccard corrected.

"It's all the same; in your condition, you're about likely to die in seven years, or in one, as I am. What do you think of that — material, Jaccard?"

"The material in general? 'Raymond'; 'The New Revelation'; 'After Death'?"

"Eh?" said Lucas. "You've read all those too?"

"How do you suppose I prepare a case?" Jaccard returned. "But what'd you read 'em for?"

"I bought them, so I read them," Lucas vouchsafed.

"Well, Jaccard?"

"Thirteen years ago," said Jaccard, looking reflectively out the window, "I happened to be in London."

and met W. T. Stead; he was getting his letters from 'Julia' about that time and having himself photographed with spooks. He showed 'em to me; I was sorry for him. I thought he was touched. That was in nineteen-six."

"This is nineteen nineteen," said Lucas.

"Yes," said Jaccard, "and over there in that office," he jerked with his head toward a suite in another part of the building, "is Vin Parding, who goes to a medium every few days to talk to his boy; and on the next floor there's Bill Woolston. I reckon on about every floor of this building, or in any other, there's a man or two these days — not counting any women — who *know* they're able to talk 'through the veil.'"

"But you," Lucas persisted. "How 'bout yourself?"

"Me?" said Jaccard. "I wouldn't care to talk 'through', even if I was sure I could. That communicating process doesn't appeal to me. May be so; may not be so; I don't care much. But there's something I do care about that reached me out of it all, since you want to know. That's this," and Jaccard's eyes rested upon a small framed photograph which always stood turned toward him upon his desk. "I'm going to see my wife again, Lucas Cullen, that I lost thirty-two years ago; and I'm not going to find her just a washed-out angel in a silly, white, psalm-singing choir that'd mean nothing to me. I'm going to find her — her that went away that night. I'll know her; and she'll know me." Jaccard checked short his feeling. "I mean," he said after a minute, "that whatever else all this spiritual stir has done, it knocked out that old Christian Endeavor idea of heaven from anybody who can think. As they used to sketch heaven to us, no one but

a half-wit would want to go there; personally, to me, hell was more appealing, Cullen. But they," turned and swept his hand to a space on his shelf where he had the books which he had used in the preparation of his case, "they show you a place you want to go to — a good human heaven where you'll know people, and they'll know you a good deal as you were as they were. That what you want to know?"

"Yes," said Lucas and abruptly changed the subject and soon departed; for he had sought Jaccard, that old skeptic and sinner, to argue him out of that human idea of heaven which had been fastening itself upon him during these long days; and instead, he found Jaccard was accepting that idea for himself.

For Lucas's whole philosophy of life, now that he had to think it over, had been based upon belief of no accountability at the end — or at any other time — but any other heaven than that populated by half-witted washed-out angels in silly, psalm-singing choirs which could mean little or nothing, one way or another, to the new arrival in the Beyond. So he had thought of everything which was real and actual — either of reward or punishment — as being here. He had never like Macbeth before the murder, boldly upon this bank and shoal of time "jumped" the life to come; he had thought of that life to come — whether in the old one hundredth-believed-in hell or in the old, orthodox milk-and-honey-blest heaven — as to be lived, not by Lucas Cullen, but perhaps by some characterless emanation of his spirit impossible to keep identified with himself. And this characterless soul would encounter, in the monotonous heavenly choir, only other spirits as lacking in human, personal attributes; so such meetings held for Lucas no terror. But the books which he re-

cently had been reading and their illustration in the recent return of "J.Q." of Galilee to display his flaming torch presented far different images; in these even Jaccard now believed; and these portrayed Lucas Culen, remaining in his own character and personality, encountering the spirits of the departed as individuals retaining personalities which were their own upon earth. Lucas did not relish such encounters.

Kincheloe would be there; and J. Q. and Henry Laylor and, worst of all, Richard Drane. They would not seek to injure him, so said the books; but Lucas rather preferred, if he met them again, that they should try. But no; they would be kind to him. Kincheloe "kind" to him! And Quinlan and Laylor and Drane! The thought made Lucas writhe. And others, whom he had injured or deceived in life, would be there to be "kind" to him; and they would know all about him — his daughter Deborah and Carew, Ethel's father. They would know, for instance, what he had recently done to Ethel. Well, whatever men like Parding and Jaccard thought, Lucas would have no faith in such inhabitants of heaven: he preferred to continue to believe in the perpetual chorus of washed-out half-wits.

But a belief, he found, was not a thing which one can command.

The English medium, Mrs. Brand, continued her extraordinary work in New York City for about ten days longer; then she came to Chicago, "sitting" in private homes of several of the most prominent people of the city and demonstrating evidences of communication to the full satisfaction of the increasing groups of devotees, and daily convincing the skeptical of the reality of her powers to reach the world beyond. She

established, therefore, most ideal conditions for trial of Lucas's plan to demonstrate the fact of Agnes Cullen's presence in the realm of the dead; and though, a few weeks earlier, Lucas had boasted of his plan and been impatient for opportunity to put it into practice, now when Jaccard told him that the time had come, Lucas delayed and postponed upon one pretext or another.

Not because he at all doubted the death of Agnes, rather, indeed, because he was completely satisfied that she was dead.

"Here's the point," he raised an objection with Jaccard; "when we get into a séance, how can we control that woman?"

"We can't," Jaccard admitted. "She's not doing it for money; besides, she's honest. She'd be no use if she wasn't. It's the known fact that no one can reach her that makes her valuable to us. You get an evidential message through Mrs. Brand from Agnes Cullen, and it'll mean something."

Lucas started a little. "But how can we know what sort of message it'll be?"

"What do we care?" Jaccard returned, "so long as we can prove it's from Mrs. Oliver Cullen." The lawyer estimated more keenly his client's face. "Oh!" he said. "Oh! A spirit can't say much," he reassured. "The difficulty is to make them say anything at all which is comprehensible."

Yet Lucas temporized. For he had learned that under extraordinary conditions, spirits — or some manifestation simulating the effect of spirits and with a good deal of disconcerting information — said a good deal; they might even speak in their own voices and appear, "materialize."

Lucas steadfastly forbade himself the credulity to take such superstition seriously; nevertheless, since he understood that such phenomena were particularly likely to occur in the presence of such a powerful psychic as Mrs. Brand, he had no impulse to visit her. Suppose she could give power not only to Agnes Cullen but to "J.Q." and Laylor and Drane - - dead, disembodied spirits - to air each his personal and particular grievance! Lucas wished he had not said so much about his plan to the family and to Jaccard.

The attitude of that fellow who called himself Lou-trelle also bothered Lucas; because, so far as Lucas could discover, he was doing nothing but spending certain regular hours each day and evening taking courses in economies and business in the Northwestern University School of Commerce. This meant that, in addition, he undoubtedly was doing something which Lucas's operative could not discover. So Lucas changed operatives but without more enlightening results. Also some one, in these days, watched Lucas whenever he left the hotel, and Lucas felt that he was watched within the hotel, too. He could not help wondering what would happen if he made an evident move to leave the city.

"But they can prove nothing," he constantly reassured himself; and in a few days he conquered his absurd dread of something "uncontrollable" occurring if he visited Mrs. Brand.

The medium then was visiting Mrs. Stanton-Fielding at her home on the Drive, where, in addition to wholly private sittings with individual applicants, Mrs. Brand was giving more public demonstrations upon certain afternoons. Occasionally representatives of the newspapers had been admitted to these sittings; more often

Mrs. Stanton-Fielding had issued admission cards thirty or forty in number for each sitting, which her friends were asked to give to others who were interested and who might not be known to herself. The holders of these cards were expected merely to present them at the door and enter without giving their names, and Mrs. Brand preferred to know nothing whatever about the people in the "circle." Accordingly, many of the attendants at these séances came not only anonymously, but heavily veiled or masked so as not to be recognized.

It was one of these sittings, where there were sure to be influential witnesses for any extraordinary "evidential" messages, that Jaccard had chosen for demonstration of Agnes Cullen's presence in the world beyond. When Lucas at last attended one of these séances, he contented himself at first with merely watching and listening to the phenomena which occurred for others; and the result of that first afternoon, while in certain ways disconcerting, yet on the whole seemed so governable that upon the next day he brought with him his daughter-in-law Myra and his grandson Bennet to ask natural questions of the medium out of concern for their lost cousin Agnes; so it was upon this occasion that request was made for proof of the death of Mrs. Oliver Cullen.

CHAPTER XII

THE SECRET OF THE TALL TREES

SHORTLY after Lucas Cullen, Senior, had communicated to his family his decision to attend the sitting at Mrs. Stanton-Fielding's, Barney received by special messenger one of those cards which admitted the holder to Mrs. Stanton-Fielding's drawing-room between four-thirty and five-thirty. With the card came a note enjoining him to be present early, to occupy an inconspicuous position and particularly to avoid recognition by the Cullens but to closely observe them.

These directions were not signed, but Barney was sure that his mother had written them. Though he had never seen her writing, these firm, clearly defined characters without the slightest trace of carelessness or tendency toward flourish immediately associated themselves in his mind with the personality of her whom, during these recent, remarkable weeks of her recuperation, he had come to know as mother. She had left the hospital several days before this and had been continuing her convalescence in the seclusion of an apartment upon Division Street far enough west to be wholly out of the paths of her former neighbors and yet within a few minutes' ride of the Drive and of Scott Street.

When Barney had last seen her, which was three days before that upon which he received her note, she had

become strong enough to sit up for several hours and even to walk about her room. With so much vitality regained, of course she had become able to converse with him; yet so far she had confided to him almost nothing about her past or about her previous feelings for him. When the time came when she had been at last allowed to see him, and he had dared to clasp her and look into her eyes; when her hands had pressed his face, and his lips kissed her cheek, and she had brought her lips about to his while she gazed at him, that wonderful epoch of brief minutes had been mute but for the breathing of names, endearments and prayers of thankfulness. And their next visit, after a long interval, had been similarly silent.

Barney came to realize that this was not solely because of her hard necessity to spare herself the exhaustion of the great emotion sure to sweep her if she recounted her life; for another and more controlling reason she forbade herself.

"You shall hear all — all," she promised him, when she clasped him, "all in its proper time, my son. I told you now, I would spend too much — too much of what I've kept within me for twenty years." And he understood that she did not mean solely her strength. "But it is almost time!"

The time, he knew, when at last she could requite the enemy of all her life; and as she felt the approach of her moment, she disciplined herself and him with pitiless sternness. As though she feared that recollection, like a spark, might suddenly fire her into vain and wasted outbursts of passion, she avoided all reference to what had happened and spoke with Barney only of what was to come.

In their future, he was to be her known and honored

son and to succeed her, at the right time, in the management of the businesses she owned; for this reason she wished him at once to prepare himself in the School of Commerce; and much of their talk together was about his work there.

Acknowledgment of him was to be after an event which she did not describe but of which she thought constantly. Her concealment, so far maintained, remained an essential of her plans; and as the day of the event approached, she forbade him to return to her and would not be reassured by his promise to take all precautions against being followed.

She had questioned him about many matters relating to Ethel Carew and the Cullens; and he had become aware that, though his mother had determined upon definite action, yet she was waiting not only to regain more strength but for a progress of circumstances which she was observing but could not hasten. To-day Barney read in those clear, concise lines of his mother's handwriting that occurrences at last favored her; she had sufficient strength to play her part and the time — her time and his and Lucas Cullen's — had come.

Barney had received the note during one of his regular hours at the School of Commerce; so, upon leaving the university building, he took precautions to elude any one who might be observing him in Lucas Cullen's interest, and at a few minutes after four o'clock, he proceeded to Mrs. Stanton-Fielding's.

It was a warm, pleasant and sunny afternoon of April, with the dampness from the morning's rain upon the walks and streets. The grass in the parkways and upon the lawns of the Lake Shore Drive was reviving into new green; trees were bursting their buds, and the brown sheaths from the yellowing twigs littered the wet

pavements. The last vestige of ice long ago had solved into the lake which lay this afternoon almost motionless, rippling light green and deep blue in wavy shifting bands as the white clouds high in the sky shifted through or obscured the brightness of the declining sun. Several great steamers were in sight, thrusting southward, deep laden with ore from Duluth for Gary and South Chicago; there were passenger vessels, inward and outward bound; a package freighter or two, and a few ore boats and grain carriers in ballast, bound back toward the Straits and the Soo which now had been ice-free for many weeks.

Barney's thoughts followed them; and he pictured the northern shores which he had known in boyhood. The season by the Straits would be a little less advanced, but the trees and brush would be breaking into the hundred-hued yellows and greens of the forest where even the pines would be bright and renewed. The warbling and whistling birds would be darting all about at mating and nest building, and the little forest animals, in pairs, stealing like shadows over the silent, well-humus-heaped ground. Yet there might be patches of snow holding to shaded hollows and trickling little rills down to the roaring brooks.

Up by Resurrection Rock, the day undoubtedly was very like that which the medium Davol had described when she had related to Barney and Ethel and Bennie Cullen the coming of the girl, big with child, to the shore of the lake; for it was again the Moon of the Breaking Snowshoes, a fitting anniversary for some thing of great significance to occur. As Barney made his way along the lake, he endeavored to keep his expectations within bounds; nevertheless his inward turbulence betrayed that to-day he looked for nothing less

than the resolution of all his life's bewilderments. He longed for Ethel with an intensity more poignant than at any hour since she had left him.

To be sure, he had heard from her only that morning and she had written a longer letter than usual, yet had detailed little information about herself. Page after page had consisted only of a statement of the condition, value and prospects of the different properties which had been her father's. She seemed to assume that he must be intimately concerned with them all; of course he was interested in whatever she was doing; but he wanted her; most of all he wanted her here, here with him this afternoon.

Upon reaching Mrs. Stanton-Fielding's mansion, he presented his admission card and was ushered, unchallenged and unannounced, into a large, handsomely furnished drawing-room temporarily transformed into a small arena by the addition of chairs circling the center, where was a large, easy chair not unlike that used by Madame Davol in her séance. Barney observed that thirty or forty people were expected; and four women and two men already were seated in the forward row. Two of the women were in black and were so heavily veiled that Barney could not tell whether he had previously seen them; one of these turned and gazed at him but without sign of recognition. The other two women, who were unveiled and in ordinary street attire, were middle-aged persons of refined and serious demeanor; Barney did not know them nor the men, probably their husbands, who accompanied them.

The windows were to the west and south so that the late afternoon sunshine sufficed to light the room; but the further corner on the right was so dim that Barney felt sure of being unobserved, if he went there; so he

took a place in accordance with his instructions and watched the people who entered.

Two women, both wearing mourning veils, and a group of twenty came in: they seemed uncertain as to the propriety of conversing with an acquaintance whom they met and finally, after a few whispered words, took seats apart from the others and one of the women sank to her knees in prayer. Two well-dressed men of about fifty took seats together, speaking to no one and avoiding encounters; one wore in his buttonhole the tin rosette of the Legion of Honor; several other men and women, all strangers to Barney, filed in; then a couple of fashionably gowned girls of about Ethel Carew's age, but not at all suggesting her in bearing or manner, found places near Barney and audibly discussed the question of smoking there; they dismissed this idea amid giggles, and began gossiping in exclamatory whispers about the people appearing in the doorway. Barney overheard the names of men and women, none personally known to him but prominent in the business and social life of the city; thus he soon heard, "Mr. Jaccard!" and saw the thin, dignified and Puritanical looking figure of Lucas Cullen's lawyer.

Jaccard gazed over the assemblage deliberately before choosing a chair about a dozen feet from Barney's corner. Five minutes later, the girls' voices exclaimed, "Why, there's Bennet — and his mother — and old Mr. Cullen!"

They stood in the doorway, Bennet a little nervous and impatient to be seated; beside him a well-gowned, gracefully assured woman of middle age; and next her was the tall dominating figure of Lucas Cullen, Senior. He was gazing critically about the room and objected stubbornly when Bennet tried to lead him; he chose

chairs for the three of them near to Jaccard's but separated from his lawyer's by two women who spoke eagerly to Mrs. Lucas Cullen, Junior, and who offered to move; but old Lucas shook his head curtly, commanded "Quiet", and they all sat down. Almost immediately afterwards, the front doors were closed and, in a hush similar to the silence at a church service, Mrs. Stanton-Fielding entered through a door at the farther end of the room, escorting a slight, refined woman of about thirty years, who was dressed in a simple, loosely draped dark gown and whom Barney recognized — without need of Mrs. Stanton-Fielding's words of introduction — as the London psychic, Mrs. Brand.

When she sat in the chair at the center of the circle and glanced about in the relaxation preparatory to her trance, the sight of her powerfully returned Barney's thoughts to that remarkable sitting with her in London half a year before when he first heard facts about himself; and he found himself tingling again with excitement beyond that which, upon that night, had kept him tramping the London streets until day-break. He had discovered, indeed, that most of those facts given to him at that particular time had been supplied by his mother who then — unknown to him — was in a hospital in London. Now his mother was here in this room. Barney himself could not decide which of the women, veiled from recognition, was his mother; indeed, he had no actual information that she was present; but he felt certain that she was.

"I explain for the benefit of those who otherwise may find confusion," said Mrs. Brand in a quiet, soft voice, "that when in the trance I appear to be generally subject to a 'control' who styles himself Doctor

Keppel, whose personality employs my material for expression. So far as I have been able to learn he appears to have been a vigorous and cultured man who died about fifteen years ago and in life here was both a physician and a preacher, having been a medical missionary to India. As he often acts merely as a guide to get through to us messages from our friends deceased, he sometimes reports in the third person sometimes in the first and sometimes speaks for himself.

"The blinds will be drawn and red-shaded lanterns used because, while not necessary for communication, the substitution of red illumination seems to facilitate the extra-corporeal phenomena."

Thereupon servants drew the window blinds and turned on the lights in the ceiling above Mrs. Brand and in several brackets on the walls, all of which lights had been covered with red silk. This illumination though dim, was sufficient for clear observation of the medium.

When Barney had attended séances in London with Mrs. Brand, she had entered into the trance without preliminary "twilight" interval of clairvoyance; and this sitting was similar; for after a few minutes of silent waiting, it was evident that some profound transformation influenced Mrs. Brand's posture and her manner of utterance; and, when her lips next moved, her speech indicated the control of a markedly robust and abrupt and masculine seeming personality:

"What a cloud of witnesses are present! So many come here to meet you! There is a spirit here with a moustache and small, pointed beard; good forehead and delicate lips; hair grayish and brown — yes, it was brown before it went away; good, pleasant hazel eyes

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He is standing beside you in third row next to the end. He is patting you on the shoulder. You can't feel it; but he thinks he is hitting you hard. He touches the rosette on your coat.

"Somebody is laughing. Don't joke — it is serious. He —"

It was the girls near Barney who giggled; the man with the rosette recognized nothing at all to suggest a joke. Barney was able to see his face when, once, he turned about with fixed, wide-open eyes to look up into the good, pleasant, hazel eyes of the brownish gray-haired spirit patting him on the shoulder. Seeing nothing, the man turned back to the medium and sat absolutely still and attentive while the voice went on.

"You ought to be ashamed of yourselves," a woman next to the girls rebuked them into silence; then she whispered to her companion, and Barney was just able to overhear, "That's Mr. William Woolston; she's describing his only brother — the surgeon who died of typhus in Serbia. They were bound up in each other."

Only after recalling his instructions did Barney shift his gaze from the set, serious countenance of the man with the rosette and observe the Cullens. Old Lucas was leaning forward a little, watching with half-squinted, skeptical eyes the face of Woolston. Barney was sure, from his expression, that Lucas Cullen knew William Woolston and had known also the brother whom the voice described.

"Does he want to say anything to me?" William Woolston asked in a compressed tone.

"He says," reported the Voice, "he does not want you to bother about bringing him back; he lies with

brave men. He is satisfied. He wants you to

Mrs. Lucas Cullen, Junior, bent to her father-in-law's ear and whispered. Barney could not hear what she said, but he did hear his nearest informant whisper "Mr. Woolston sent yesterday to have his brother's body brought home!"

If it was this which Lucas Cullen was hearing from his daughter-in-law, he silenced her with an impatient shake of his head which meant, "I know."

The Voice ceased to speak of the spirit beside the man with the rosette; and though its next words stirred a sobbing cry one of the unveiled women in the front row, old Lucas sat back and relaxed. The woman hysterically attempted to find with her arms a child described before her; but Lucas was little moved, probably because — so Barney thought — he did not know the woman. Similarly the next emotional demonstrations on the part of evident strangers concerned him so little that for a few moments he seemed not to pay attention at all. He glanced toward Jaccard who looked at him and slightly nodded; and Lucas Cullen nudged his daughter-in-law who sat back consciously, evidently preparing herself for some act, when the Voice suddenly said:

"Laura is here!"

Jaccard jerked.

"She is there before you!" the voice continued without more definite designation. "She is young and beautiful — a beautiful soul always; beautiful in face too. She has beautiful, red hair — dark auburn and eyes very blue; and hands white and small and very smooth. There is a least bit of blemish — a scar on the back of her left hand. Yes; she says it is a scar she shows how a dog, playing with her, bit her to

hard. She holds the hand out to you and smiles; you used to kiss that scar, she means to say."

Jaccard had seized the sides of his chair and was staring, with lips wincing. "Laura?" he said, against his will.

"There is some one with her; a girl, young and beautiful, too. You never saw her as she is; she has developed since. You saw her, Laura wants to say, only when a baby; when they both died. She has hair like Laura and —"

Jaccard's breath whistled audibly. He made no other inquiry but sat struggling with himself; what had happened had come as a complete surprise to him and, for the moment at least, was so overwhelming as to drive from him all other thoughts. A moment later, when the Voice ceased to speak of Laura and her child, Jaccard turned and gazed at Lucas Cullen blankly and as if he had forgotten him; and as the client stared at his lawyer, Lucas Cullen's big form quivered.

Throughout the great room, every one sat very still. The lights in one of the wall brackets went out, leaving the left end of the rows of chairs only vaguely illumined by the ruddy glow from the center. A servant tiptoed from the rear of the room to restore the lights, but a whisper halted him and he retired. The whistle of Jaccard's breathing diminished; in the front row, the woman who had groped for the form of her child suddenly sobbed again and then controlled herself. Near Barney, the girls who once had giggled sat looking about with sobered, scared faces.

"That was Mr. Jaccard!" one confided, half frightened. "Mr. Jaccard." It seemed that the fact that Jaccard had been affected was particularly significant to every one; or perhaps it was that now every one

in the room had witnessed some close friend in manly agitation.

At the center of the room the medium sat, open-eyed, in the erect, vigorous posture which had distinguished her since entering the trance: her eyes roamed from place to place, sometimes resting upon the sitters but more often gazing between them or before them as though observing presences which to others were invisible; but the Voice did not speak.

"I would like to learn whether communication can be obtained," said a smooth, perfectly assured, feminine voice; and Barney saw, not by any motion of her own but by the attention of those seated about her, that Mrs. Lucas Cullen, Junior, was speaking, "for Mrs. Oliver Cullen — Agnes Cullen — who was killed last September on the *Gallantic* and presumably dead."

Barney's sinews seemed of themselves to draw taut. This demand plainly was part of the Cullen plan which his mother was there to counter; or rather, it had been part of Lucas Cullen's scheme. When he had nudged his son's wife a few minutes earlier, undoubtedly he had meant her to put this request; but now he did not want it. Jaccard's disturbance had so affected Lucas that at first he had forgotten that he had given his daughter-in-law the signal; then he had tried to halt her; but too late. Barney saw him sit back indignantly; he saw Jaccard, suddenly remembering his client, glance about sharply. Then Barney gazed toward the forward row at the darkened end of the room where he believed his mother to be. But either he was mistaken in supposing her there, or this demand was not the one to draw her from concealment. No one moved and no one spoke but the Voice which announced:

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"All the while a spirit has been beside you, a fine-looking man, middle-aged, with dark hair and brows; strong, blue eyes; looking down, not at you but beside you on the right. He holds a book in his hand; he holds it up so Doctor Keppel can see. It is the Book of Mormon."

Evidently the Voice was replying to Mrs. Lucas Cullen, Junior. Others in the room took this as answer to her; she so understood it; beyond any doubt, Lucas Cullen at her right thus received it. He stiffened and stared for an instant, somewhat as Jaccard and others had done; then he hunched in his seat and waited.

"He is showing Doctor Keppel an open space outdoors; about it is a big woods. He has cleared away the trees in the space, and he has a little house of boards; new; no paint on it. There is a woman there; very young; he is young too; and very strong. It is long ago. Thirty years ago, Doctor Keppel thinks. No; he shakes his head; it is longer ago than that. It is more than forty years ago; more than that, he says. It is in M. He builds up an M — Mi — Michi — Michi-gan, he says it is. The young woman has a child; a little girl, he says. He kisses both of them. You are there; you come by; you are young, too; tall and very strong. You walk into the shack. He is showing the inside now; it is very plain; no furniture; just a bunk of board; a table; a bench of boards. On the table is a book; the Book of Mormon; you pick it up; you drop it down and kick it; you kick it out the door. Something happens. Doctor Keppel gets wondering what; it is confused; he cannot see. He feels passion; strong anger; hate. Many men come —"

The "you" described by the Voice no longer was

Mrs. Lucas Cullen, Junior. Clearly it was old Lucas Cullen, himself. If any one had doubt, a glance at old Lucas was quite sufficient to find it confessed. He sat, attempting to appear unmoved, indifferent. Barney saw him grow rigid in his struggle with the sensations he was attempting to down. Jaccard, from three seats off, appreciated this; his grandson and daughter-in-law felt it, and she endeavored to relieve him.

"I asked," she said, her smooth, assured voice as steady as before, "for communication, if possible, with Agnes D. Cullen who —"

Lucas's hand came up with a jerk and thrust against her leg. "Hush!" he whispered to her. "My hush!"

Undoubtedly he meant his aspirate only for her; but he had such poor control of his enunciation, as of the muscles of his thrusting hand, that the rasp of his voice reached over the room. Several of those seated at the front turned about and gazed at him; every one at the sides and in the rear watched him. Few of them knew if any of them, indeed — could know what dismay connected itself in Lucas Cullen's conscience with a vision of a quarrel in the Michigan woods with a man who possessed a Book of Mormon.

The Voice, which had halted, spoke on.

"Another stands near you. He was there before," he says. He wants to say he has often been beside you; shorter with light hair and gray eyes; energetic looking; a good face. He builds up an L to show you. He wants you to know without a doubt who he is. L — A-Y, he builds up. Another L — Now he shows a space with trees about; great trees; a forest where men cut some of the trees where is a scream of water

and a mill. Doctor Keppel feels a vibrating and buzzing; it is a lumber mill. Over the door is a sign; Doctor Keppel can read it all now. H. L-A-Y-L-O-R. H. Laylor, it says. He nods; yes; that is it. It looks like long ago; everything new there; but many years ago. Now there is a mist like a fog. No; he shakes his head. It must be smoke; yes; he says it is smoke. Now Doctor Keppel feels like heat; flames; and much heat; roaring; great flames; a forest fire approaching the mill. He is there and tries to save the mill; he does not try to get away; not till too late —"

The Voice — full, emphatic, resonant — dominated the silent, darkened room. The Voice, which had all but materialized the presence of the departed loved ones to many others, was endowing — with all but materiality — phantoms of the past for Lucas Cullen. It made little difference in the awe with which others watched him whether they believed that the Voice viewed sights actually spread before the spectral dead or whether the Power which spoke was drawing these visions from the close, secret conscience of Lucas Cullen.

If this were so, it was against his will; they could all see him — at least Barney could see him — attempting by senseless physical constriction of the muscles of his body, of his hands, of his jaw and by the tight pressure of his lips, to prevent more being drawn from him.

"He knows," said the Voice, and every one knew that it had ceased to describe the fire and had returned to contemplation of the present spirit of him who had not got away, "he knows that all your life you wondered how much he suffered. He does not feel that now, he wants to say; at first he did. When he came over long ago, he thought to try to punish; before he

died, he swore to; but over here, he did not. I tried to help, instead, the ones who lived suffer."

Beside Lucas Cullen, his son's wife sat facing forward, assuming calmness, trying not to notice the panic palsy of the old man; Bennet for a while had attempted the same indifference; but now he abandoned it and, reaching across his mother, he seized his grandfather's arm.

"You're sick," he said. "Come out with me."

"It's queer, he thinks," continued the Voice, "how all your life you wondered about him — how long he suffered and didn't think about the other at all; the other who didn't send the torch. He lived, so he suffered all the time. His wife — the others, he meant and his child; the girl. Grew up too, she did; had a son; and you —"

"Come!" Bennet commanded, almost loudly. Jaccard arose and Jaccard arose, too; the word or the disturbance stopped the Voice; and, as they began getting Lucas Cullen on his feet, Barney arose and stepped down the line of chairs.

It was all contrary to his directions; but he knew that what now was occurring had not been foreseen. He realized that this commotion might end the trance but as the Cullens determined to escape, he determined that they should not. He thrust Jaccard away from Lucas Cullen and, opposing Bennet, he pushed Lucas Cullen back into his seat.

"You're going to stay this out!"

Lucas gaped up at him. "You here?"

Barney caught his breath and glanced toward the medium who was sitting silent in the big chair. "The have been asking," he said distinctly, "for commun-

cation with Mrs. Oliver Cullen; can you obtain it for them now?"

The medium did not move; nor did her lips make reply; all about the room people lifted in their seats or stood up; there was a flutter of whispers; these ceased while every one watched to see what Lucas Cullen would do against the stranger who had commanded him; and there was silence again.

"I am here," slowly said a controlled, vibrant voice.

"I am Agnes Cullen; I—"

Barney gazed into the face of Lucas Cullen who stared at him with eyes widened, with jaw dropped; the dim, pink light upon his skin lost a tint as the blood went from Lucas Cullen's face; and Barney knew that he had recognized the voice. Now that Barney heard the voice in its full power and energy, he knew that any one who once had heard it would never forget. All about were others who had known Agnes Cullen and now knew the tones speaking in the dark, still room; these, like Lucas Cullen, had believed her dead; and in this place, and at this moment of amazement, they received the voice as not embodied but as from a spirit.

"Direct voice!" some one gasped in awe; and others whispered it. "We're hearing a direct voice!—That's her voice!—I knew her!"

Bennet Cullen had recognized it and dropped down into his seat, astounded; his mother knew the voice; and Jaccard; most certainly of all, Lucas Cullen continued in the conviction that one dead was speaking. He knew why Agnes Cullen, though dead, should break all bonds to speak; he knew that the one who had just called for her was her son; and at this moment if the dead could possibly return, she would. And whatever any one dead *could* do, he credited Agnes Cullen,

dead, with power to perform. Yes, she would come back!

"I am going to tell the account of Lucas Cullen and his family and of myself and my son," said the voice clearly and steadily. "It begins far back; it is brief enough; and includes that which you have just heard and the effect of which on him you have seen. That, I shall explain. Sit down, every one, and be silent."

So far, even to Barney, the voice seemed to proceed from no located source. He had believed his mother present among the veiled women at the left of the room where the lights had gone out; but such was the quality of her tone that it seemed not enunciated from one spot but pervasive throughout the room. No one seemed able to place it; those who attempted looked first here, then there and about. Very probably, at this time, there were some who realized that not a fleshless soul, but a woman was speaking; yet, surely the woman was Agnes Cullen who, after having vanished for half a year, had returned to deal a blow — whose nature she was about to reveal — to her enemy, Lucas Cullen, and probably to explain the reason for that long-known enmity and some of the secrets of her life.

Every one was silent.

"The beginning," continued the voice, "was when I was a child in the Michigan forest. My father was the man whose spirit just now was here holding the Book of Mormon — whose cabin Lucas Cullen entered to quarrel with him and kick the Book of Mormon from the doorway. My father was named Drane — Richard Drane. He was born in Joseph Smith's colony in Illinois; and when they were driven out, his

parents went with the party under King Strang who chose to find refuge, not in flight to Utah, but in the northern woods. For safety from the vigilantes, they went to Beaver Island, just south of the Straits, where they founded Strang's kingdom. But they found no safety; again persecution. Drunken fishermen raided outlying farmhouses and insulted their women; hate and violence fed murder and revenge; my father's people fought back, showing false lights on the lake shores, wrecking boats — men said — stealing cargoes and murdering crews. King Strang enlisted the Indians, and when the government proceeded against him, fortified a small island in a little lake and planted cannon. It was all a miserable business, ending when Gentile settlers invaded Beaver Island, shot Strang, burned the forts and tabernacle of the Kingdom, sacked the settlements and scattered the Believers. Most went west; but my father, then only seventeen, stayed in the State, clinging to the best of the belief in which he had been born but discarding the worst. He cleared a farm in the woods, married a Gentile girl from Big Rapids, and was living an honorable, useful life when he crossed the path of Lucas Cullen who recently had arrived to make his fortune in the forest."

The source of the voice was discovered. It came from that darkened end of the room where Barney had supposed his mother to be; and, as people craned about or stood to see the speaker, she arose and, having cast off her veil and the dark coat she had worn, she stood a little apart, dressed all in white, with the dim glow from the center of the room falling vaguely upon her face and figure, while women and men made recognition.

"Mrs. Cullen! — Agnes! — Mrs. Oliver Cullen! —

She's here! — That's she! — Why did she — How changed! How could it be —"

It seemed to Barney that every one must recognize that she was before them in the body; yet so strong had been the spell of the illusion that a few still saw her as a phantom. Lucas Cullen did.

Not only Barney detected this, but Bennet and his mother who now realized the truth.

"It's Agnes, father!" his son's wife shook him.
"It's — come back!"

"Yes," he said. "Yes; I see!" But he understood that his daughter-in-law saw Agnes too as a materialized spirit.

Barney forgot him and watched his mother. This was her moment, he knew, for which all her life she had schooled herself; this was the effort for which, in these last days, she had been preparing and driving herself; now she was to expend that, stored within her, of which even to him she had dared not speak. Probably the séance had not offered the precise opportunity which she had hoped for; undoubtedly Barney's own interference with the departure of the Cullens had been unexpected; but Barney was sure that, on the whole, it was as she had wished. When she spoke on, he recognized that her deliberate, careful words were being recited from rehearsals within herself repeated through years of waiting for such a moment.

"My father," she said, "had abandoned farming to take out lumber, cutting from land he had homesteaded and from surrounding sections which he bought. You could buy timber land cheap in those days — two dollars and a half an acre; the State practically gave it away; but there were men who thought it foolish to pay the government anything at all for the great

trees on the State lands. They bought one section and set up a mill and cut over the square miles all around — eight sections or ten or twenty; as long and as broad as they dared. Lucas Cullen was one of these men. He had nothing against my father until my father bought from and paid the government for five hundred acres of standing timber which he found, when he came to it, that Lucas Cullen was cutting. This caused trouble for Cullen when my father asked for a refund on his purchase money; not actually serious trouble; for Cullen had too much influence and too much power of intimidation for that. But it brought Cullen's anger on my father; Cullen couldn't see why the Mormon must be so particular; if he had found five hundred acres of his own being cut, why didn't he say nothing and just cut off a thousand of the State land somewhere else?

"But the Mormon Drane couldn't do that; and the Mormon Drane — whatever lies Cullen told against him — had one wife only. She was my mother. She knew that Richard Drane had been reared a Mormon; but, because of the hatred and fear bred by Strang's Kingdom, he had concealed it from others till Lucas Cullen found it out and spread it about with lies — lies — lies. One of the lies, which proved in the end the most dangerous, was that the Mormon had lust for the wife of another lumberman, Henry Laylor."

As she spoke, Agnes Cullen came forward and showed herself more plainly in the light. No one — not even Lucas Cullen, in his guilt-clouded consciousness — believed her a phantom now. Agnes Drane, his enemy, had returned to stand before him and accuse him to his family and neighbors and intimates and her own. He could reason, if he halted his whirling thoughts,

that she had not been away in the realm of the dead but his brain was not functioning rationally. He knew she was returned in the flesh; yet his alarm endowed her with the advantages of association with the dead of whom she spoke and who, a few minutes before, the Voice had identified as present before him,—Richard Drane, the Mormon, and now Henry Laylor!

Lucas Cullen sat very stiff and still in his chair with his son's wife and his grandson on one side; on the other side, in the seat which Myra's acquaintance had given to Barney Loutrelle, sat the son of Agnes Drane. About them, every one sat or stood very quietly, watching intently Agnes Drane and Lucas Cullen and his daughter-in-law and his grandson and his lawyer and the stranger next him who had prevented his escape and who had asked, the third time, for Mrs. Oliver Cullen. In the very center of the room the medium, Mrs. Brand, had come out of the trance, easily and without demonstration; discovering that some extraordinary event was in progress, she remained seated as an observer.

"Originally Lucas Cullen told the lie about Richard Drane and Laylor's wife only to harm the man who had made him trouble and to injure a rival; for Henry Laylor had built a mill only a few miles from Cullen's near a little place called Galilee; he bid for the same timber and the same gangs to get it out, and for the same bottoms to take the lumber to Chicago. It cost Lucas Cullen; and it cost Henry Laylor; but neither would let the other drive him away; so they fought till the dry summer of the great fires, and Henry Laylor was burned out; and, as you have just heard, he was killed. Perhaps he injured himself and was surrounded by fire; perhaps he stayed too long and smoke overcame

him; exactly how he died, no one knew. Lucas Cullen — you have just heard — wondered all his life: Laylor could not tell then; perhaps he could not now. But he was killed in that fire — murdered.

“For Lucas Cullen had that fire set; he met near Galilee a man in his pay — a sawyer named Quinlan — and sent him to light shavings upwind from Laylor’s mill. Probably not with intention of killing Laylor; just to burn him out. But when it was known that Laylor was killed, and that a man had been seen setting a torch to the timber, Lucas Cullen moved quickly to save himself; he said that the man who had set the fire was the Mormon Drane who wanted to kill Laylor to get his wife. It was a savage, lustful lie of the sort which excited men like to believe; they went to get the Mormon and lynch him; then Lucas Cullen — partly to save Drane from being murdered, let us think, but partly also to stop suspicion swinging to his guilty self — made a great play for justice and for a trial for the Mormon and stopped the lynching — and persecuted Richard Drane into the cell where he died — my father — for a crime which Lucas Cullen and his man Quinlan had done.

“Is it not so, Lucas Cullen? Stand up and deny it, if not so! Stand before these people or sit there and speak and say to the soul of Henry Laylor, who stands before you, that you had no hand in his murder! Say to the spirit of Richard Drane, there before you with the Book of Mormon, that for his own crime — not yours — you sent him to die in prison! Say to the soul of your own servant, James Quinlan — J. Q. with his ever flaming torch — that, when at last he threatened to turn against you and confess his crime, for the sake of going into the next world clean — say

that you, through your man Kincheloe, did not kill him a few weeks ago at Resurrection Rock! Say it is not so!"

She stopped and waited for answer; but Lucas Cullen neither stirred nor replied. She had swung the eyes of every one from herself to him; and his eyes, only moved — his small, keen, crafty eyes darted from left to right and back again, resting nowhere, meeting no one, ceaselessly seeking for void in which to look and finding all space filled with the eyes of the living or — who knew? — with eyes of the dead.

The room had become a court with Lucas Cullen the prisoner accused and on trial; and as though his son's wife and his grandson realized that, without response, he could not go free, they ceased to pull at him; moreover, Barney Loutrelle sat very close to him. Barney did nothing; but Jaccard gazed at Barney, and Jaccard also refrained from interfering.

And the others now realized that they composed the court before which Mrs. Oliver Cullen was haling Lucas Cullen for murder,— for one murder done long ago but also for another done recently and for which, as they gazed at Lucas Cullen, they saw he could not deny guilt. So the original sensations which had swept over them first when they seemed to hear Agnes Cullen's spirit speak and then when they knew that Agnes Cullen herself had returned as though from the dead, were lost in this new amazement.

"My father did not die for many years," Barney heard his mother say. "My mother worked to support herself and me and for money which constantly she paid to lawyers for pleas to get my father free. She tried too hard; she died when I was a young girl, and I took up the useless attempts. The way to accom-

plish something, I thought, was to watch the Cullens; Lucas Cullen and his brother John, who knew too much of Lucas's character, already had fallen out. I changed my name and came to Chicago to watch Lucas Cullen; he left Chicago and built his house at St. Florentin; and I went to live near there. I was not sure at first whether or not he knew me when we met.

"That was the summer before his daughter married, when he had her friend, the Marquis de Chenal, as his guest at St. Florentin. So De Chenal happened to meet me one day; he left Lucas Cullen's house several times after that to find me. He attracted me, too. I thought he loved me."

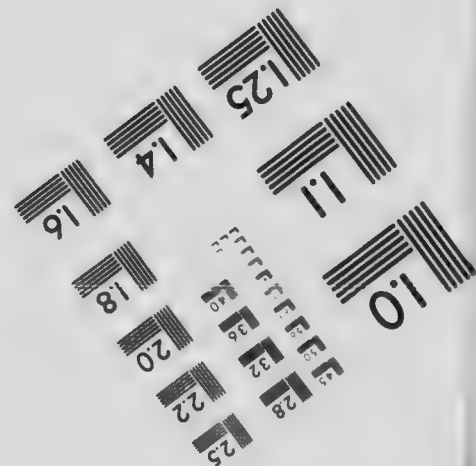
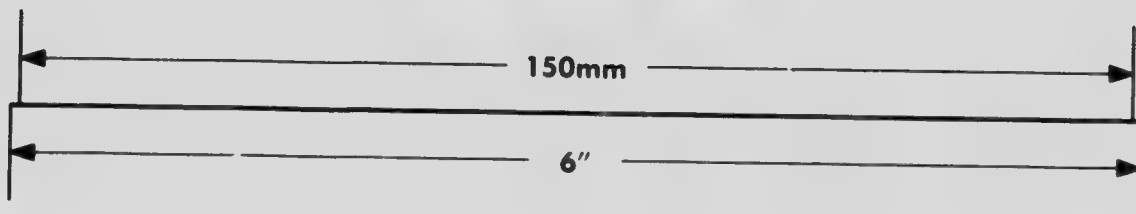
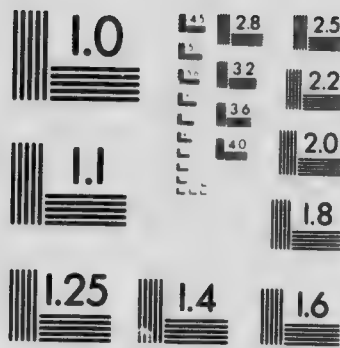
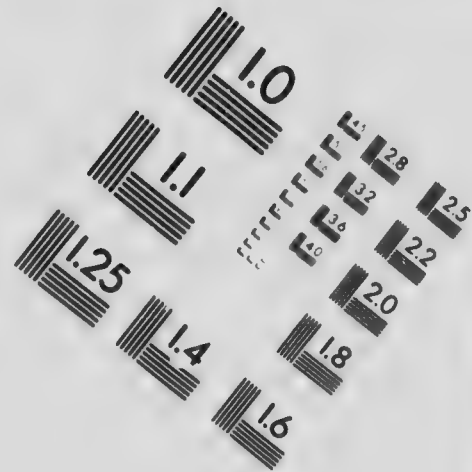
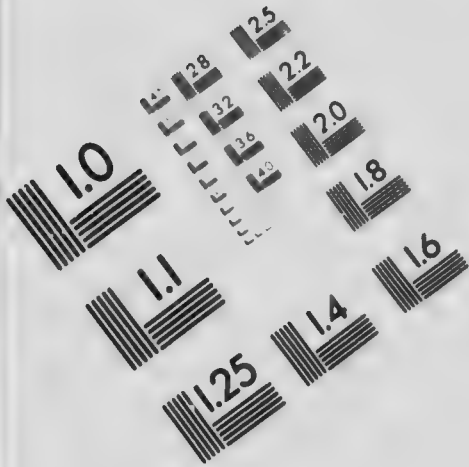
Her voice for a moment failed; and Barney could remain in his seat no longer. While she had held complete mastery of herself, while her will-supported strength had sufficed to keep her controlled, clear in thought and speech and purpose, while she had been arraigning to judgment the enemy of all her life, Barney had made himself obey her. But now, not her will, but the power of her body to obey her will was weakening; and what she was saying no longer contained the tone of direct accusation. For the moment, at least, she was ignoring her charge against her enemy for another purpose not yet fully plain.

"I told De Chenal why I was as I was, how my father was in prison, falsely accused by Lucas Cullen. De Chenal swore to help me; he was hot in my cause," she continued. "He swore to justify my father and punish Lucas Cullen. First, he would marry me. I loved and believed him; perhaps he believed himself in those days; I was very young and he was young and — we went to a priest —"

Barney began to make his way toward her. Now she



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was stripping her soul before these gaping people, not to punish Lucas Cullen, but to acknowledge him, her son. Barney heard their whispers; they seemed to have forgotten that, at the beginning, she had spoken of her son,—she whom they had known only as childless. But now they remembered; and they reminded one another.

"Lucas Cullen learned of it, but gave out that I, your guest had gone on a hunting trip," she pressed on. "He followed and finally found us. His money, of course, was an influence; I had nothing; De Chenal owed two million francs. He had forgotten that. Also Lucas Cullen showed that I had lied to him about my father; it was plain that the Mormon had been a murderer. Had not Lucas Cullen, at great risk to himself, fought for a fair trial? How could De Chenal go back to his creditors with a dowerless bride and to his family with the daughter of a convict? Lucas Cullen made his escape easy. I was under age; legal necessities had been ignored. Moreover, was I not the daughter of Drane, the Mormon murderer? He married De Chenal to his daughter, gave him money and packed him off. It was easier than before to make me an outcast. The next spring, my son was born."

"Mother!" Barney cried, forbidding her, as he stepped toward her under the light. From the other side of the room, where she had been, women called her name. But she did not hear them.

"This is my son!" she cried, her hands clasping Barney's. "My son lost to me that summer of his birth because I was made an outcast but now — now restored to me!"

So her son caught her in his arms, as her strength collapsed; with the aid of some woman, unknown to him

but who lovingly called her "Agnes" and kissed her cheek, he bore his mother through the door at the back of the room and away from the hubbub behind them to where they could be quiet and alone.

CHAPTER XXIII

IN THE MOON OF THE BREAKING SNOWSHOES

ETHEL CAREW was on a train returning Sheridan from a trip of several days through Montana and Idaho, when she happened to pick up a twenty-hour-old newspaper which printed, under a Chicago date line, the information that Mrs. Olivia Cullen — the wife of the late son of the late John Cullen of Chicago and herself widely known throughout the East — had returned to her home after having been missing for many months. Her family and friends had supposed her lost on the *Gallantic*, in September, 1918, but she had survived and, by concealing this fact, had created, by her return, a sensation in Chicago circles.

This was all that the paragraph of telegraphed news matter supplied, and it was quite enough for Ethel to learn at one moment.

"Barney's mother," she exclaimed to herself; and with her amazement of wonder as to what cousin Agnes had been doing and where she had been, there ran a thrill of excited feeling for Barney. Did he know, she wondered? Where was he? What was it all about — cousin Agnes alive and concealing herself! It was too much to grasp at once, particularly with this total lack of explanatory details.

She immediately wrote telegrams which she had dispatched from the next stop, one to Barney and the other to Mrs. Wain, asking them to wire her at Sheridan.

dan. But before she reached her home, she obtained a more recent newspaper which supplemented the Butte item with the brief information that "Following the sensational reappearance yesterday of Mrs. Oliver Cullen, Mr. Lucas Cullen, Senior, had disappeared from his hotel; his family is searching for him."

Waiting her at home, she found telegraphed replies stating that letters were on the way; indeed, two letters, written since the return of Mrs. Oliver Cullen, already had arrived.

The one from Barney was exasperatingly short and indefinite. It confessed, first, that ever since the day after Ethel had returned to Wyoming, he had known that his mother was alive and that she was Mrs. Oliver Cullen; he told how Mrs. Wain had taken him to his mother and related something of his experience since; but he said little about cousin Agnes's reasons for concealing herself, what she had been doing and what she meant now to do. He said nothing whatever about his father. Why didn't he? His letter was not meant for information; it was an appeal to her to return to St. Florentin; or rather to Resurrection Rock, where he was going with his mother and where, if Ethel came, they would tell her everything.

Cousin Agnes had enclosed a card on which she had written, "Come, dear Ethel, when you can. Agnes."

Bennet, who was the author of the other letter, offered far more. He had written a volume of twenty-two pages requiring a big, business envelope and five stamps. He had prefaced his informative pages, however, with extensive expletive. In Bennet's emphatic opinion, Ethel had certainly succeeded in spilling the beans; he wished to congratulate her; if ever a family had been in bad, theirs was now. But he had to con-

fess that cousin Agnes had staged some show; town was talking about it from Lake Forest to India and the rich, racy gossips were only beginning to around, too.

Of course, Bennet said, the dear newspapers had faithfully done their bit; but as cousin Agnes's oration had been entirely informal — no court actions started, no one legally indicted — the papers could repeat a tenth of what they really wanted to with laying themselves open to libel actions. It was breaching the hearts of the sob-squads and the society porters but never mind; only the bourgeoisie was being deprived; every one who was anybody knew all that had happened and more too.

Ethel read two sheets of this and skipped a third before she began finding out what cousin Agnes had actually done and where she had made her oration. On the next pages, however, Bennet reported with creditable completeness "Marc Anthony's address over the body of Cæsar" — as Bennet called it; and he added such comments and interpolations as:

"And after this, to show that the family was still running true to form, she said a little piece about the murder of Quinlan . . . then, in order to buck up the good name and general reputation of the Cullens, she spilled a little about aunt Cecilia and uncle Hilaire. She made it official, absolutely, that he had come into our family only for money; he'd been in love with Agnes. In fact, he'd married her; or made her think he had; uncle Hilaire had been her husband first and is the father of her son, your friend, Loutrelle —"

The letter blurred in Ethel's hand, and things spun about her. Barney — her Barney — not her father's son; cousin Agnes's, yes; and Hilaire de Chenal's!

"Barney," she cried, lifting to her lips his letter which she had let drop before. "My — my Barney, I'm coming to you!"

The next day she started and, not visiting Chicago this time, her way lay through Minneapolis direct to the Straits, picking up the Chicago-Sault Ste. Marie line just above Escanaba and following about the northern points of Greenbay and on east into the narrowing peninsula over the same road which Barney and she had traveled upon their first morning of acquaintance.

In contrast to the coldness of that snowy day, everything was green and warm, with the sun glowing in a clear, still sky.

Ethel had had no need to change cars upon this occasion, yet she had awakened earlier than upon the morning in January; indeed, though she had gone to bed early in the hope of soon dropping asleep so that instantly the night would pass, her excitement and suspense so stimulated her that she slept but brokenly. She dressed shortly after dawn and, after breakfast, waited intolerable hours until, marvellously, the porter at last called "Quesnel," and the train shrieked and stopped.

Barney was there; he had his two hands out for her as she came down the step. He had never known why, so suddenly and so cruelly, she had fled from him; but he did not care now that she was back; besides, he saw by her great joy how cruel the past weeks had been to her. She came down, giving him both her hands; so they clung together, gazing at each other, each searching, half fearfully, for some evidence of inward change; each finding none and both trembling with happiness. Then they remembered other people.

Asa Redbird was there, having driven Barney over with a team and a buckboard; and after Ethel had spoken to the Indian and while he was carrying the bags to the buckboard and while she still supposed they were all to drive to the lake together, she appealed to Barney: "Oh, why did you bring Asa? Can't you drive back alone?"

"You'd rather? Or would you, by any chance, care about walking with me —"

"Barney: I thought all night about doing that!"

"Did you? Then you're not too tired, dear?"

"Tired — now?"

So they sent Asa ahead, and side by side and hand in hand, as soon as they were out of sight of other people they set off down the St. Florentin road together.

"Barney, how's cousin Agnes — your mother!"

"In remarkably good shape, considering everything. She's had a total of seven operations; but the last is over now. You'll see her soon."

"What a terribly hard thing she did!"

"You mean —"

"At Mrs. Stanton-Fielding's."

"What do you know about that?"

"Oh, Barney, Bennet wrote me everything."

"He did? I wondered what he'd do; he's a good sort at bottom."

"Barney; about grandfather? What happened to him?"

"How much have you heard, Ethel?"

"Just that he left his hotel and hasn't been heard of."

"No one knows more; nothing's been seen of him since that afternoon."

"Then grandmother?"

"She returned here to St. Florentin day before yesterday," Barney said very gently. "She wouldn't let any one come with her; she thought if she was here alone, with just the Indians, he might come back to her."

Ethel's eyes filled. "That's like grandmother. You've seen her here, Barney?"

"I stopped in yesterday to thank her for a cake and jelly she'd made with her own hands and sent out to the Rock for mother."

"Dearest, isn't she — wonderful?"

"Your grandmother? Yes."

"I knew it; but I meant — your mother."

Barney halted, and she stopped before him; they were in a little bower of trees and leafing bushes, with birds whistling and chirping. He looked into her eyes, and she saw that he wanted to tell her a part of what he was feeling but when he looked away from her and down, she knew he could not.

"A mother," he said, "is rather a great institution."

It caught at her heart as a more conscious expression could not have done.

"I knew, dear, that cousin Agnes was your mother before I went away."

He looked up at her. "Yes; I'd supposed so."

"But that was not why I went, Barney. Now I can tell you why. It was — horrible, Barney. I never really believed it but — but, you see, the next morning after that night we — we loved, dear, and you'd held me and I'd been yours, grandfather came to me and told me that cousin Agnes was your mother and your father was — mine."

His hand jerked from hers in recoil. "What?"

"I tell you I didn't believe it; but he said — you see,

I couldn't *know*; and I couldn't be with you again without knowing."

"No; of course not."

"It was his low, ghastly lie to separate us. Can you kiss me now, Barney?"

"How I want to!" But he stood away from her, his hands locked behind him as that night they had loved; and she saw, as she met his eyes, how her flight had hurt her boy from the Indian shack in the woods. "This time, Ethel, if I have you, I must keep you."

"I came back to stay, Barney."

Yet he only clasped her hand, as before, when the night went on; and she knew that, having once lost her, he dared not claim her again until she heard from her mother all there was to know.

Perhaps he had realized this as little as had she, for both now wished haste rather than delay, delightful as that was; so when they found Asa waiting with his team, they chose to drive the rest of the way, passing the fork of the road to St. Florentin to continue to Wheedon's beach.

"I'll see grandmother to-day," Ethel decided, as she gazed up toward the old house, "but first, cousin Agnes."

A cedar boat of Asa's own reliable manufacture was pulled up on the sand to ferry them, *ajawaodjigade*, to Resurrection Rock.

"We've a motor boat, but I thought this morning you'd like the *tchiman*," Barney said.

"I couldn't go out in anything else," Ethel replied, and, looking back at the beach, both thought of Madame Davol's story of the girl who had come there alone long ago in the Moon of the Breaking Snowshoes.

"What Mrs. Davol told us was true," Barney said.

They went to the landing on the south of the rock, climbed the steps and entered the great room, now warm and streaming with sunlight, where Barney's mother was waiting,— a strange, physically weakened cousin Agnes but whose touch seemed more vital than ever before as her lips kissed Ethel; whose hands, though thin, clasped with a confident pressure; whose eyes looked at Ethel steadily as ever, with some new sadness in them but with new joy, too, and with that haunting shadow quite gone.

She told to Ethel, for herself, everything which Bennett already had repeated and then related the events following Barney's birth here on Resurrection Rock.

She had stayed here with her baby during the summer, for she had regained strength slowly. In September she realized that she was in desperate need of surgical care. It had been fair and warm in that Moon of the Gathering of Wild Rice. Her baby was well; Noah Jo's wife, Woman of the Valley, had proved very careful and had been doing for the baby just as Agnes asked. Every evening Noah Jo brought fresh milk from the shore. Agnes had become so ill that she scarcely was able to travel, much less trust herself with the care of her child on the journey.

Later, it was easy to see that she should have taken the baby to some dependable white people or arranged for his care at some institution. But an institution was what Agnes most dreaded; and she feared to let any white people know that she had a baby; for was she not without a husband and obviously an unfit person to rear a child? So she had left her baby with Woman of the Valley and journeyed alone to Sault Sainte Marie where they had kept her in bed, not a few days but weeks. She tried to escape the well-

meant vigilance; and when she almost succeeded, it was with such calamitous effects that she had more weeks in bed from pneumonia; and when at last she returned to the Rock, it was deserted.

The neighboring Indians said that Noah Jo had perhaps gone to Kettle River or to L'Arbre Croche or, maybe, to Cross Village, or, perhaps into Superior to the Minnesota Indians. So she spent agonizing weeks in vain pursuit of this guess and then of that. Her money was all gone; sometimes she begged loans from strangers who pitied her; often she worked, menially, for wages enough to let her go on with her search. Then she heard that Noah Jo and his wife had been lost on the lake in a November storm.

She went to Chicago shortly after that to resume her effort to get her father free and to punish, if he could, the man who had taken away her father and was responsible for the situation which had caused the loss of her son. She soon obtained a position in John Cullen's office. He then was on bad terms with his brother because of his knowledge of some of Lucas's methods; but he would not proceed against his brother, and when he discovered that Agnes Dehan was Drane's daughter, he dismissed her. But Oliver already was in love with her; though she told him all about herself and about her child whom she had lost, he persisted in his wish to marry her. He turned against his uncle even more violently than had his father; he actively went about gathering evidence to free Richard Drane; and he spent much effort and money in search of Agnes's child.

Oliver did not make public accusation of his uncle, but he did accuse him to his family. The sons sided with their father; but Deborah and her husband, who

had his own reasons for lacking respect for Lucas, aligned themselves with Oliver and Agnes. But they never could do anything effective. Lucas defied them; Quinlan could not condemn Lucas without hanging himself; so Agnes's father died in jail. And the years passed with no trace of Agnes's son.

But Oliver and she continued the search; they bought Resurrection Rock and set a watch there in case Noah Jo should return. When Hilaire de Chenal ran through his wife's money and could get no more from Lucas and placed his château on the market, Agnes bought it and broke it up and brought over the great salon to install in the house she built upon Resurrection Rock. She raised this as a constant rebuke to Lucas Cullen for what he had done; and as her gage of defiance to him. He did not know whose it was or what was its purpose until he saw in it that great room torn from his daughter's château and knew that his enemy had brought it there to be her son's. For, as the years went by, Agnes became firm in the belief that, in spite of the failure of the search, her boy lived.

When the war came, she knew he was of age to go; so she visited the camps where the nation gathered its young men; at a camp in France she actually exchanged a few words with a reticent boy named Loutrelle, from Charlevoix county, Michigan, and upon her return to America, she received word from Boyne that an Indian named Mabo had brought up a white boy who had once been in the possession of a Chippewa fisherman named Jo, and that this boy, who had taken the name Barney Loutrelle, had joined the Canadian army and now was with the American forces.

Agnes immediately sailed for England, and, when the

Gallantie was torpedoed, she was brought to London apparently injured fatally.

She had been grouped with the injured from another vessel, torpedoed at the same time, and consequently had been wrongly identified. But she was unaware of this, until after several days she was able to send for Marcellus Clarke, who was in England. From him she learned that her husband was dead and buried, and that his uncle was claiming all the family properties.

As she had previously drawn a will in favor of her son, in case her husband did not survive her, she now had her survivorship proved to protect Barney's interest, if she died; but she withheld from announcement the fact that she was alive.

"I don't think I then knew why, Ethel," this strange motherly cousin Agnes was saying. "I just did; perhaps I realized that I might accomplish more, as dead, than I had living. But I wasn't thinking a great deal about other people. Mr. Clarke told me that he," she looked toward her son whose hand she clasped, "was in London; he'd been wounded again. I thought I had to send for him; but —"

"She didn't," Barney helped her out, "because she was in such bad shape that she thought I shouldn't see her, when I was hurt, myself."

"And I knew they were going to send you to fight again! My boy, how could I know how you'd been thinking of your mother? How could I want you to carry me in your mind as I was then? Besides, the doctors thought I was about to die; I did not see how I could bear having you for once and — go. So I tried to arrange some way to be with you always, now that I'd found you, whether I was living or dead, and have influence in your life.

"I knew of several remarkable experiences in spiritism, and when I learned that he had gone to Mrs. Brand, I sent for her to ask what I might do, before I died, which would give me power after death to remain close to my son," Agnes continued to Ethel. "She said perhaps if I opened a channel now, I might find it useful later. I told her a little about him and myself. It seems that when she was in a trance at his next sitting with her, she was able to repeat to him not only what I told her but other things I hadn't mentioned."

"She certainly gave me a jump," Barney said and pressed his mother's hand.

"Then through that channel came the messages from your father, dear."

Ethel drew closer. "Then they were all from father?"

"I had nothing to do with them — except perhaps starting the current of our affairs flowing through the channel. Some people might say that all that followed were telepathic thoughts from me. But I did not know anything about those messages till December after the armistice, when Mr. Clarke went to France to find him —" she held more tightly to Barney's hand — "and bring him to me. Mr. Clarke found that he had got his discharge and sailed for America in response to a letter received from his friend, Huston Adley, in London. I sent for Huston and was amazed to discover that your father — apparently — had established communication and had sent my son to Resurrection Rock and had mentioned that there would be some one named Bagley who was a man actually in Mr. Clarke's employ and used on private business.

"Mr. Clarke found you," she turned to Barney, "were on a slow transport —"

"Never slower than that trip, mother."

"So he sent a letter by fast mail boat with an order on Wheedon to give Bagley the keys and telling Bagley to open the house and wait for you. As soon as possible, I was taken to a boat and was on the water when Huston received the third message, which he sent to you, Ethel, on Scott Street. A copy of his letter reached me in New York where I was in a hospital."

"Then you couldn't have sent that!"

"Some would say, Ethel, that Mrs. Brand telepathically could tap my dream strata two thousand miles off as well as a few squares away; and it was true that all this time I was thinking about the Rock and Bagley, and about you and about him and about Quinlan and his grandson, Bob, and all the rest."

"But the events, Cousin Agnes."

"They could be called coincidences."

"Do you believe they were?"

"What's one more opinion, dear? You knew your father."

"All my life," Ethel said, "it seemed to me he wanted to do something — and could not."

"He wanted," Agnes replied, "to take open and public action against your grandfather; but he never had evidence upon which to proceed. After your mother died, he decided to keep silent, though he would have nothing to do with your mother's family. He took several trips in the Minnesota and Wisconsin Indian districts to get trace of my boy."

"Did he, when alive, know James Quinlan?"

"He several times tried to get Quinlan to confess. If he continued, after his life, to know about affairs

here, he might have observed that Quinlan had been broken by the death of his grandson in flames following the loss of his own son in the Iroquois fire."

"Then father sent Quinlan to the Rock?"

Agnes looked to her son. "You weren't sure, were you, that Quinlan meant to go to the Rock?"

"No. You remember he was in the neighborhood when we got here," Barney reminded Ethel.

"Your grandfather was excited about it; Quinlan may have had some vague idea of doing for your grandfather; and your uncle warned your grandfather. Maybe Quinlan went to the Rock only because he'd seen lights there. But your grandfather didn't know how much, or how little was up. He sent Kincheloe to find out; and I've always figured Kincheloe got frightened and killed old Quinlan without much reason.

"I know no more about that," Agnes went on. "I was in New York and was not brought to Chicago till the next week. The London letters, and the stir in the supernatural, began making a plan for me. With no other idea than to strengthen the belief that I was dead, I had had Huston manipulate a report of a message from my spirit; this reached the Cullens, and when they took it as they did, my way was easier. Of course I wanted to justify my father; but he was dead and forgotten by every one but me. I wanted to punish Lucas Cullen, but he is near the grave; what most I wanted was — my son! And Lucas Cullen was the only living witness of the truth of how he came honorably to be mine! I had to make Lucas Cullen attest that truth; I knew no other way!"

Barney bent over and kissed her. "That's all now, mother."

"You understand, Ethel?"

"Your father, Cousin Agnes, and Henry Laylor were they at that sitting; or had you told Mrs. Bra about them before?"

Agnes shook her head. "No; but I was thinking about them. Some would say they came only from my mind."

"I wouldn't," Ethel said.

She canoed with Barney to the mainland that afternoon, beaching near Asa Redbird's cabin close to the point where she had followed Kincheloe out upon the ice; and they took the old path through the woods to St. Florentin. Barney accompanied Ethel to the big house but let her go in alone to find her grandmother.

Mrs. Singlewolf informed her that the old lady was taking a nap; but if this were true, Sarah Cullen's slumbers were light; quickly she was at the head of the stairs calling hopefully down, "Who has come in?"

Ethel replied and ran up and gathered the thin little figure in her arms.

"There, there, Debsie," Sarah petted her daughter's child and it was Sarah who comforted Ethel when she cried. "My boy's gone away but to come back, child. The Lord holds him in his hand and 'he that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High, shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.' . . . I have been studying to-day, Debsie, the ninety-first psalm. Shall we read it together?"

Barney waited outside for a long hour during which Sam Green Sky often interrupted his formal efforts in the garden to offer interested comment or question.

"Damn funny business, 'bout this place now," Sam informed. "Somebody killed out there, huh? Kinche-

loe been killed down in Chicago, everybody say; who done that to him?"

"Nobody," said Barney. "That was an accident."

"Huh?" said Sam doubtfully. "Perhaps you tell me when old man come back?"

"I don't know," Barney admitted.

"Two day ago," said Sam, "old lady say old man come back *wabang* (to-morrow). Say come back *wabang* yesterday; to-day he come back *wabang*. When anybody ketch up with *wabang*, I like to know?"

Barney made no reply to this philosophical query, and Sam stood gazing about musingly and whistled cheerfully to himself. "Old woman all right, you think? Sure to go to heaven?"

Barney agreed.

"Old man *akiwesiish*, eh? Sure to go to hell! But all good old woman, sure to go to heaven, think about is bad old man, sure to go to hell. How anybody fix up that?"

Barney did not attempt the task.

When at last Ethel appeared from the house, he took her quickly away from the curious scrutiny of the Chippewa gardener. Near the lake they climbed a little hillock wooded with new pine and balsam and cedar, where the slanting rays of the warm sun had dried the softly carpeted ground. Ethel sank down and, as Barney sat beside her, he saw tears again wetting her cheek.

"I'm not crying," she denied, when he tried to comfort her. "Barney, I'm so proud of grandmother. I've seen the finest thing in the world just now."

"I know," Barney said. "Even Sam was speaking to me of her — love."

"She doesn't think of herself at all, but only of him

— constantly. She prays for him, but she never blames or judges him; she speaks — and I believe she thinks — of only the fine things about him and when they were young together. He loves her too, you know; he was always good to her and faithful. She'd go to him wherever he is, if she could. Love — Barney, it frightens you to see what it can become, how wholly one person can join with another, what complete power over another's happiness one can gain — she was telling me about their first home; it was a cabin in a clearing. They got a cow and a little calf, and when she called them in at night, deer and the fawns used to come up to the bars with the calf to get grain. It was so wild where they were; and they were alone. She wants to see you to-morrow, Barney, if you care to come."

"Me?"

"Yes; I told her we —"

"What, Ethel?"

"What do we, Barney?"

"Love you, I do. Ethel, you're not afraid?"

"Of your power over me?"

"You've had every power over me, Ethel, since our first day!"

He put his arm about her, drawing her to him; but for a moment she held back to look into his eyes. "I didn't mean the sight of grandmother's love made me afraid, dear. To know it made me want you as never before!"

Later, as they walked down the wood road to Wheedon's, "Sing, Barney," she commanded. "That song you sang after you left me that day on the Rock. '*A Paris; à Paris* —"

"*Ah, j'y étais mousquetaire!*"

"That's it!"

"You sing too."

So, going home together hand in hand, they sang, and through the wood and over the still, evening water there echoed the voice of their happiness.

They married six weeks later, at the old house at St. Florentin. Bennet and Julia and their mother came up for the service, after which Barney and Ethel went west. Agnes returned to Chicago soon after the Cullens went back; and old Sarah Cullen remained at St. Florentin alone with the Indians until July when, after weeks of drought, the forest fires, which had rested for many years, swept through the tinder-dry slashings and second growth of the peninsula and burned the old house to the ground. So Sarah retreated, perforce, to the home of her older son to pray and wait.

Throughout the western forests also drought prevailed that summer; and in the great tracts of tall, virgin pine of Idaho and Montana blazed timber fires such as had not been seen in Michigan for forty years. They took everything before them, brush and crown, and camps and settlements in their paths.

Here and there the flames suddenly burst on two sides of little villages, all but cutting off escape; and in one of these places — so the telegraphed news related — a huge old man, strange to the settlers but dominating in manner and plainly expert in ways of fighting forest fire, placed himself in command and turned away the flames from the town. He himself worked tirelessly in the fire lines with axe and spade; and when word came that two of his men were missing and probably had fallen and were lying overcome by smoke and gases, close in front

of the flames, he went in and brought out one man and returned for the other and never came back.

Days later, when the fire had burnt out, and men were able at last to go through the black, smoldering region, they found his remains beside those of the man for whom he had returned. Identification was not easy; but soon the wires carried to Chicago the information that the old man had been, beyond doubt, Lucas Cullen.

Bennet brought the message to his father at the office.

"He went with his boots on," said Luke, winking wet eyes. "That's how he'd like to go. And — well, boy, it couldn't be better than that."

"No," said Bennet. "No," and he was not ashamed to cry a little; for he knew that his father was not thinking only of his father dead with his boots on, but of the man he had saved from the fire and of the other for whom he had died.

"I'll go right home," said Luke, "to mother."

"She knows; she was home when the telegram came; it was to you, but she'd opened it," Bennet related.

Luke jerked a little. "How did she — how is she, boy?"

"She's all right," said Bennet, and then he broke down. "Oh, damn it, father, she — she took the telegram and read it and looked right up at me. 'Bennet,' she said, 'he — he whom they thought might be your grandfather, was he. Let us give thanks and be glad. Greater love than this no man hath, Bennet, than he lay down his life — he lay down his life for —'"

Ethel and Barney received the news together.

"I knew grandfather wouldn't go without doing

something," she said proudly. "You see, he can better face them all now!"

"Yes," said Barney; and he knew she meant her father and mother and his own grandfather of the Book of Mormon, and Laylor and Kincheloe and Quinlan of the flaming torch.

"I guess," Ethel said, "old J. Q. can put out his torch. I can't think that one fine act at the end can change one all at once; but it's something begun which, over there, must have power to go on."

THE END

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